REMARKS

ON

THE PRESENT TIMES,

&c. &c.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

REMARKS

ON

THE PRESENT TIMES,

EXHIBITING

THE CAUSES

OF THE

HIGH PRICE OF PROVISIONS,

AND

Propoſitions for their Reduction,

BEING

An INTRODUCTION to HINTS and OBSERVATIONS on

AGRICULTURE.

BY JAMES M'PHAIL.

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REMARKS

ON THE

PRESENT TIMES.

A TREATISE may be written on agriculture, without touching on politics or morality; but I am of opinion, that the means of the improvement of agriculture, cannot be fully treated of independent of one or the other; and ſurely morality and religion are of very near affinity: a man may indeed be a moraliſt, while at the ſame time he is wholly deſtitute of real religion; but it is morally impoſſible that a man, endowed with real religion, can be devoid of morality: therefore, having written on the means of the improvement of agriculture, I ſee no reaſon for blaming myſelf for wandering into what ſome call "the mazes of religion and politics," more eſpecially as I have been calumniated, branded, and accuſed of holding principles ſubverſive of all good order.

I have, I ſay, been accuſed, and that too to no leſs a man than the ſecretary of ſtate, of holding principles, democratical principles, which are deemed extremely dangerous to the peace, harmony, good government, and good laws of Great Britain. This

being the caſe, and being conſcious, as conſidering myſelf a ſubject, and in the capacity of a ſervant, that my principles were then, and are now, very different from what they have been, and ſtill are, by ſome poſſeſſed of more zeal than knowledge, repreſented to be, I was and am ſtrongly prompted to lay them more fully before the public, in order that it may decide which are moſt dangerous, ſly officious ſpies, informers, and calumniators, or men holding principles ſuch as mine are. And as I thought it out of my line of life to write on politics alone, at any time, and more eſpecially in ſuch intemperate times as the preſent, I concluded it would be moſt prudent, for more reaſons than one, to exhibit my political principles, by publiſhing Hints and Obſervations on Agriculture. Theſe appeared in public laſt year, and this year I make it my evenings recreation, to write an introduction to them.

In the firſt place, therefore, I ſhall point out what I apprehend were the leading cauſes of my having been accuſed and ſuſpected of holding dangerous principles.

Secondly, I ſhall give an account, as far as I know, of the nature of that accuſation laid againſt me, and the manner in which I received the intelligence thereof, and make ſome remarks thereon.

Thirdly, I ſhall make religious, moral, philoſophical, and political miſcellaneous obſervations, exhibiting my principles on theſe ſubjects, in reference to and excited by the annexed hints, obſervations,

vations, &c. and in the courſe of theſe inveſtigations I ſhall, no doubt, be led to diſcourſe and animadvert on the preſent times—on pride, luxury, oppreſſion, prejudice, envy, monopoly, the high price of proviſions, and the moſt likely methods that might be ſucceſsful for lowering and for preventing their riſing again to that enormous price, which may become generally ſo diſtreſsful, as to be the means of creating diſcontent, and murmurings, among honeſt, well diſpoſed mechanics, and the labouring induſtrious poor; and of furniſhing a pretence for the riotous behaviour of the ill-diſpoſed among the ſame claſſes. Theſe are weighty ſubjects, of great importance, deſerving to be attentively conſidered by all thoſe who wiſh well to the community in particular, and to mankind in general. But above all, the rulers of the affairs of the nation, the nobility, the gentry, and the clergy, ſhould ſeriouſly ponder them; and I truſt few of rank, talents, or learning, will cenſure my productions on account of their being written by a man in a low ſtate of life—on the contrary, I entertain a hope, that men far above my rank in every reſpect, and who therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to know experimentally what it is to walk in the loweſt ſpheres of ſociety, will read with patience, and judge with candour, bearing in mind that the author's intention is not to irritate, or ridicule, but to inform and convince. For be it known, that he is not one of thoſe who are diſcontented, and murmur with their

lot and condition among men; on the contrary it gives him much pleaſure and ſatisfaction when he views his preſent ſituation, and reflects that he was educated and trained up among the loweſt claſſes of ſociety—inured and initiated in all the branches and toils of huſbandry, and horticulture. Be it known too, however, that when he was a farmer's ſervant, and day labourer, he was not altogether ſo contented as he now is; for then himſelf and companions found their lot rather hard: they have ſtood in the fields, and reaped the fruits thereof, from morning light through the day, under the ſcorching rays of the burning ſun—for hours beyond the time he hid his ruddy majeſtic head in the weſtern ſkies, to give place to the more feeble glimmerings of the duſky moon—without one draught of wholeſome beer, their fainting feeble hearts to chear. This they would have ſuſtained with leſs anxiety, had they not known that their employer was at the ſame time wallowing in all the ſuperfluities and luxuries which the earth and ſea produces, added to all the modes of pleaſure which the art of man has invented, for the gratification of his unruly never ſatisfied carnal appetites; the enjoyment of which, if report be true, brought him to an untimely end.

About the period when theſe things occurred, many were the conſultations which I held with myſelf, night and day, concerning the mode of life proper for me to purſue, to raiſe myſelf above being

ing a day labourer, and farm ſervant; and the concluſion generally made, was, that it would be beſt, whatever might be the event, to continue peaceable, honeſt, ſober, and induſtrious, and to leave the iſſue in the hand of that all wiſe, all governing, and over-ruling Being, who made all things, and who is able in a moment to annihilate every created thing. And ſhould this eſſay chance to fall into the hands of any of the lower claſs of ſociety, let them not imagine that I wiſh them to repine, grudge, or fret with their lot and condition, or with the preſent times*, or to quarrel with, and ſtigmatiſe, the governors and great men of the country; but, on the contrary, if they wiſh to raiſe themſelves to better and more comfortable circumſtances, in the range of ſociety, let them come to the ſame reſolution as I did; and if they do, I have but little doubt they will find their lawful endeavours crowned with laſting ſucceſs. Let them conſider, that from the beginning of the world, there were, and will be, till it's final diſſolution, governors, and governed—men in the higher, middle, and lower claſſes of ſociety—ſome rich, ſome poor, ſome contented, and ſome diſcontented. This ſtate of tranſitory things works for the good of

* "Say not thou, what is the cauſe that the former days were better than theſe, for thou doſt not enquire wiſely concerning this."
SOLOMON.
In lamenting the evils of the times, we ought careſully to avoid all murmuring at the diſpenſations of Providence.

all, and is permitted and appointed by Him who is the creator, univerſal ruler, and ſole governor of every thing, viſible and inviſible; it therefore cannot be reverſed.

Having thus far premiſed, I now proceed to the illuſtration of my firſt propoſition, which was to "point out what I apprehend were the leading cauſes, of my having been accuſed and ſuſpected of holding dangerous principles."

To begin then, it may be neceſſary to take a ſhort view of political tranſactions during the preſent reign.

The peace concluded in the year 1763, though it received the ſanction of both houſes of parliament, was far from giving general ſatisfaction to the people: the manner in which it was begun, and the hurry with which it was concluded, were not approved; the terms were likewiſe cenſured by many, as extremely unequal to what might juſtly have been expected, from the numerous victories and advantages which had been obtained over the enemy; and from this period various cauſes concurred to excite in the nation a ſpirit of diſcontent.

The affairs of Mr. WILKES, a member of parliament, made much noiſe; himſelf and his papers were ſeized, in his own houſe, by three king's meſſengers; and for publiſhing ſome papers, ſaid to have been ſeditious and unchaſte, he was proſecuted; and for fear of being puniſhed he fled from the kingdom. Shortly after he was out-lawed and expelled

pelled from the Houſe of Commons. However, in the year 1768, he returned to England, and ſoon became an object of public attention. He was elected member of parliament for Middleſex; but in this, if hiſtory be true, he was not well uſed; for though he had a majority of 847 votes in his favour, yet the Houſe of Commons, two days after the election, reſolved that his antagoniſt ought to have been returned member for the county. For this and other national grievances, petitions couched in very ſtrong terms were preſented to the throne from different places. Theſe, and ſome other ſubjects of a ſimilar nature, gave riſe to much political diſcuſſion among all ranks of people, concerning the rights of man, and of nations, but myſelf being then young took no part in them; nevertheleſs I overheard with no ſmall degree of attention; and no wonder, for ballad ſingers were found in every fair, ſurrounded by crouds of people, chanting forth either the exploits or ſedition of Mr. WILKES and his No. 45.

Mr. WILKES, however, underwent the puniſhment of fine and impriſonment, after the expiration of which, in the year 1771, he was choſen one of the ſheriffs of London and Middleſex, and in the ſubſequent parliament a member. In conſequence of his manly and ſpirited conteſt with government, it ſhould be remembered, that general warrants were declared to be illegal; an end was therefore put to

ſuch warrants, and the unlawful ſeizing of an Engliſhman's papers by ſtate meſſengers.

In conſequence of an act of parliament, paſſed in 1765, cramping the trade of the colonies, the whole continent of America became inflamed; and owing to this and ſome other ſimilar regulations and diſputes reſpecting taxation, Britain and her American ſubjects quarrelled, and the Americans having combined in congreſs, declared they would not ſubmit, and in fact they did caſt off their allegiance to the king of England. Whether they did this juſtly, or unjuſtly, I pretend not to decide; perhaps there were faults on both ſides: but be that as it may, the Britiſh government thought it right to endeavour to reduce them by force of arms to comply with it's meaſures, and accordingly hoſtilities commenced.

The beginning of this conteſt was the occaſion of much new ſpeculation and animadverſion on political ſubjects—on the balance of power, on the rights of nations, on the rights of kings, on the rights of man, and on the rights of individuals. It was the means of, and gave great room for, the introduction of ſpeculative opinions and conteſts: high words paſſed, and were exchanged, in both houſes of parliament: the newſpapers abounded with political diſcuſſions, and politics were talked of, with no little warmth, in almoſt every aſſembly and private family. Britain was termed the mother country, and conſequently America her legitimate offspring: from thence it was ſtrongly contended, that the mother,

ther, as ſhe had been at great trouble and expence in rearing and maintaining her children, had a right to command them to make ſuch regulations in their mode of conduct relative to trade, commerce, &c. as might tend to the raiſing herſelf to ſtill greater power and grandeur among the nations of Europe, ſo as to become, in times of diſpute, the moſt preponderating power—and thus, by making herſelf the greateſt commercial ſtate in the world, thereby becoming exceedingly rich, ſhe might in her old age live in eaſe and luxury, feeding and feaſting on the productions of her youthful induſtry.

On the other hand, it was with no leſs warmth argued, that it is the natural duty of the mother to rear up her children, and to maintain and educate them, in the beſt manner ſhe can afford; and when arrived at years of maturity, to leave their future conduct towards her to their own diſcretion. Certain it is that the laws of England give the mother or father no power over their children after they come to years of diſcretion, that is, after they are upwards of twenty-one: but to determine the time when a colony may be ſaid to arrive at the period or age of diſcretion, when it ought to be ſet at liberty, and permitted to chuſe for itſelf, is a ſubject of great ſpeculative importance, and will be, while nations continue their ambitious projects.

War

War being begun and continued between Great Britain and her colonies, the French nation, it ſeems, thought it a favourable opportunity for leſſening the power of the former. It ſupplied the Americans with arms and ammunition, ſome French officers entered into the American ſervice, and in February 1778, a treaty of alliance between the French king and the thirteen United Colonies was concluded. In this treaty it was declared that the direct and eſſential end was "to maintain effectually the liberty, ſovereignty, and independence, abſolute and unlimited, of the United States of North America, as well in matters of government as of commerce."

The conduct of France towards Great Britain, in taking the part of the revolted colonies, occaſioned the commencement of hoſtilities between the two nations, though without any formal declaration of war on either ſide. For in June 1778 two French frigates were taken by Admiral Keppel, and no ſooner had the French heard of this, than they began to make repriſals of the ſhips of Great Britain.

About this time a manifeſto was publiſhed by the French court at Paris, ſetting forth the conduct of the French king towards England. It ſays, "When the ſovereign Diſpoſer of events called his majeſty to the throne, France enjoyed the moſt profound peace. The firſt concern of his majeſty was to ſignify to all the powers of Europe his

his ſincere deſire that the bleſſings of peace might be perpetuated to his kingdom. This gracious diſpoſition of his majeſty was generally applauded; the king of England, in particular, teſtified his ſatisfaction, and gave his majeſty the moſt expreſſive aſſurances of ſincere friendſhip. Such a reciprocity of ſentiment juſtified his majeſty in believing that the court of London was at laſt diſpoſed to adopt a mode of conduct more equitable and friendly than that which had been adopted ſince the concluſion of the peace of 1763, and that a final ſtop would be put to thoſe various acts of tyranny which his ſubjects had, in every quarter of the globe, experienced on the part of England from the æra above mentioned.

"His majeſty perſuaded himſelf, that he could ſtill place the greater reliance on the king of England's proteſtations, as the primordial ſeed of the American revolution began to unfold itſelf in a manner highly alarming to the intereſt of Great Britain. But the court of London vainly imputing that to fear or feebleneſs, which was only the natural effect of his majeſty's pacific diſpoſition, ſtrictly adhered to her cuſtomary ſyſtem, and continued every harraſſing act of violence againſt the commerce and the navigation of his majeſty's ſubjects."

Thus the government of France goes on with a long declaration of its juſt and righteous actions, views, and proceedings towards England; profeſſing

ſing France to be a pacific, generous, and liberal nation; and after pointing out the political views, and progreſſive events, which occaſioned the war between France and Britain, the manifeſto concludes thus—That "all Europe will be enabled, by this publication, to judge which of the two ſovereigns is the real author of the war which affects their kingdoms, and which of the two potentates will be anſwerable at the tribunal of heaven, for that train of calamities occaſioned by the war."

Though not formally avowed, an anſwer to the French manifeſto was given by the Court of London. It ſays, "The ambition of a power ever a foe to tranquillity, hath at length obliged the king of Great Britain to employ the ſtrength which God and his people have confided in him, in a juſt and lawful war. It is in vain that France endeavours to juſtify, or rather diſguiſe, in the eyes of Europe, by her laſt manifeſto, the politics which ſeem to be dictated by pride and cunning, but which cannot be reconciled with the truth of facts, and the rights of nations. That equity, moderation, and love of peace, which has always regulated the ſteps of the king, now engage him to ſubmit the conduct of himſelf and enemies to the judgment of a free and reſpectful tribunal, which will pronounce, without fear or flattery, the decree of Europe to the preſent age and to poſterity. This tribunal, compoſed of the underſtanding and diſintereſted men of all nations,

tions, will never regard profeſſions; and it is from the actions of princes that they ought to judge of the motives of their conduct, and the ſentiments of their hearts."

This is the beginning of the memorial of the government of Great Britain; and after endeavouring to juſtify in the eyes of the world its own conduct, and to criminate that of France, it ſays, "Such are the unjuſt and ambitious enemies, who have deſpiſed the faith of treaties, to violate the public tranquillity."

Here we ſee two powerful nations reciprocally accuſing each other of pride, ambition, cruelty, and perfidiouſneſs—endeavouring, with all the powers of learning and eloquence, to blacken the character, and wound the reputation of each other, in the eyes of their reſpective ſubjects, and in the eſtimation of the other nations of Europe. And what man, diveſted of partiality, who reads and beholds the conduct of both, can wholly juſtify the behaviour of either.

The enormous expence of the American and French war, and the burthens which were on that account laid upon the people, was the occaſion of much diſcontent, and ſeemed to convince people of almoſt all ranks, of the neceſſity of public œconomy. At the cloſe of the year 1779, and beginning of 1780, meetings were therefore held in ſeveral counties of the kingdom, at which great numbers of freeholders were preſent, who agreed

to

to preſent petitions to the Houſe of Commons, in which they earneſtly requeſted, that before any new burdens were laid upon this country, effectual means might be taken by that houſe to enquire into and correct the abuſes in the expenditure of public money, to reduce all exorbitant emoluments, to reſcind and aboliſh all ſinecure places and unmerited penſions, and to appropriate the produce to the neceſſities of the ſtate, in ſuch manner as to the wiſdom of parliament ſhould ſeem meet.

The year 1780 was diſtinguiſhed by diſgraceful diſturbances in London, occaſioned by an act of parliament paſſed in favour of Papiſts. An aſſociation* of Proteſtants met in a large body in St. George's Fields, from whence they proceeded with cockades in their hats to the Houſe of Commons to petition parliament for a repeal of the act. On the 20th of December this year a declaration of war, by Great Britain, was publiſhed againſt Holland. At firſt this meaſure ſeemed to be generally applauded by the people of Britain; but there were, however, many who thought it a very raſh and impolitic ſtep. Spain, too, I had almoſt forgot to mention,

* This aſſociation, hiſtory ſays, was chiefly compoſed of "Methodiſts and bigoted Calviniſts in the lower ranks of life." Be this as it may, I myſelf did not think fit to join it, and it was the opinion of ſome of my acquaintance, who I believe are not only religious in profeſſion, but alſo in reality, that it was improper and dangerous to join it.

by, it is ſaid, the intrigues of the French court, was at length brought to engage in the war againſt England.

Thus Great Britain being involved in war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, and with ſome ſtates too in the Eaſt Indies, her yearly expence was become very high, and therefore much diſcontent and oppoſition to government prevailed throughout the kingdom, and politics continued to be the chief ſubject of converſation among all ranks. The immenſe expence of carrying on the war at ſo great a diſtance from the ſeat of power and preparations; the great accumulation of public debt it had brought upon the nation; the great effuſion of blood it had occaſioned; the vaſt increaſe of taxes, and the diminution of trade; were evils of ſuch magnitude, that could ſcarcely be overlooked even by the moſt ſtupid and inſenſible. Reforms in parliament, and in the abuſes of the expenditure of the public money, were talked of, and propoſed by men of great abilities in both houſes of parliament; perhaps more with a view to their own aggrandiſement, and to raiſe themſelves to places of power and profit, than to bring about ſuch a reformation in parliament and the expenditure of public money as they hinted at. Nevertheleſs, the oppoſition in parliament to the meaſures of miniſtry grew ſtronger and ſtronger; for in March 1782, the Houſe of Commons, after repeated ſtruggles, addreſſed the king, requeſting him

him to put a ſtop to any further proſecution of the war with America. This event rendered a change of councils and of meaſures abſolutely neceſſary, and diffuſed general joy throughout the kingdom; a complete change in the miniſtry was effected, and in the beginning of 1783 a general peace was concluded.

To many the terms of peace were a ſubject of much regret; for no ſooner were the preliminary treaties with France and Spain, and the proviſional articles with America, preſented to parliament, than they met with a ſtrong oppoſition, and were reprobated as being highly injurious to the intereſt and dignity of the nation *. The addreſs of thanks for peace was loſt in the Houſe of Commons by a majority of 16—224 to 208. Thus the majority of the Houſe of Commons enliſted under the ſtandard of what was termed the Coalition Leaders. This evidently indicated a miniſterial revolution, which ſhortly happened; for the peace-makers were obliged to vacate their places, and withdraw from power; and all plans for reformation in public offices ſeemed now to be given up. A motion for correcting the defects in the repreſentation of parliament was loſt by a majority of 293 to 149;

* From the year 1783, to the commencement of the war with France in 1793, it is evident to every intelligent obſerver, that Great Britain proſpered in trade, riches, population, and luxury. Is it not therefore clearly demonſtrated that the conditions of peace agreed on were not ſo deſpicable as ſome repreſented them?

and

and a motion that leave be given to bring in a bill for ſhortening the duration of parliaments, was rejected by a majority of 123 to 56. A bill was alſo propoſed for reforming the boards of the treaſury, admiralty, ordnance, exciſe, ſtamps, and other offices, but which was oppoſed by ſome members of adminiſtration, who had moſt ſtrenuouſly contended for that meaſure before they themſelves had obtained lucrative places. This bill, it is ſaid, was ſuffered to paſs the Houſe of Commons merely to amuſe the public; but it was rejected by the Houſe of Lords, 40 to 24. Every thing went on juſt in the way the coalition adminiſtration pleaſed, till a bill by ſome of its members was brought into parliament, ſaid to be encroaching on the prerogatives of the crown. Be that as it may, the coalition miniſtry were turned out, and another formed, which appeared to me to be a coalition one too, for ſome of thoſe were included in it, who ſtrongly oppoſed one another relative to the affairs of the American war.

Owing to the diſmiſſion of the coalition miniſtry, the crown and the Houſe of Commons had a great ſtruggle for power. In the year 1784, the coalition majority, in a committee of the Houſe of Commons on the ſtate of the nation, came to the following reſolution: "That it is the opinion of this committee, it having been declared by this houſe that in the preſent ſituation of his majeſty's dominions, an adminiſtration ſhould be formed

which poſſeſſed the confidence of this houſe, and the public; and the preſent adminiſtration being formed under circumſtances new and extraordinary, ſuch as were not calculated to conciliate or engage the confidence of the houſe; and his majeſty's preſent miniſters ſtill holding high and reſponſible offices after ſuch a declaration, is contrary to true conſtitutional principles, and injurious to his majeſty and his people."

By many it was thought a new and dangerous doctrine, that the king ſhould diſmiſs thoſe who had not as yet by any act rendered themſelves undeſerving confidence, as miniſters, and appoint new ones out of compliance to one part only of the Houſe of Commons. Indeed it was impoſſible for him to comply with the reſolution, that he might appoint ſuch as had the confidence of that houſe, and of the public, for the majority of that houſe was compoſed of the members of the coalition, ſtriving for places and power; and the public by their numerous addreſſes were in general averſe to their conduct, and diſpleaſed at almoſt every thing pertaining to the term Coalition.

Before theſe jarrings in parliament could be tolerably ſettled, a diſſolution of it was thought neceſſary, and accordingly in a very ſhort time it took place; this was called an appeal to the people: and it ſoon appeared that it turned out greatly in favour of the new miniſtry. Nevertheleſs oppoſition ſtill threw many difficulties in the way

way of adminiſtration; for Mr. BURKE, in a long ſpeech, expatiated on the merits of the laſt parliament, reprobated the king's ſpeech at the opening of the new one, and the addreſs of thanks for it, and ſtated that his purpoſe was to move "That an humble addreſs be preſented to his majeſty, aſſerting the rights of the Houſe of Commons, and reprobating the king's miniſters in having adviſed his majeſty to break his royal word, and diſſolve his parliament, after he had pledged his word to the laſt Houſe of Commons that he would not make ſuch an uſe of his prerogative, before they had got through the arduous buſineſs upon their hands; and likewiſe for having adviſed his majeſty to make a ſpeech to the new parliament, from the throne, full of doctrines the moſt unconſtitutional and alarming."

At the cloſe of the American war, the national debt *, and conſequently the taxes, were become exceedingly high; and through the medium of newſpapers, and numerous publications of all ſorts, the minds of the people of Great Britain were informed or enlightened ſo as to fathom the grand or leading cauſes of theſe national burthens—that is, pride, war, and luxury. Though the war was terminated, and peace concluded, yet new taxes to

* The whole annual charge brought upon the nation, before the beginning of the war in 1793, by its debts, funded and unfunded, appear to be nearly 9500000 £. ſterling.

pay the intereſt of the debts thereby contracted were abſolutely neceſſary: and although a fund was appropriated for its gradual diſcharge, yet owing to concurring circumſtances, ſuch as preparing to go to war with Spain, to intimidate the Empreſs of Ruſſia, &c. the national debt and taxes, inſtead of being leſſened, were increaſed.

Similar to thoſe of Great Britain, too, were the occurrences which happened in other nations of Europe. The pride and ambition of the French court prompted it to take the part of the American Colonies againſt England; and as France pretended to be fighting for the freedom of the Americans, no wonder that the ſubjected people of the French dominions ſhould deſire that ſort of liberty for themſelves, which they were endeavouring to obtain for others.

Prejudice, which ought to be deteſted, taught the fooliſh, uninformed part of the people, to regard a neighbouring nation as their natural enemy, and was not leſs powerful in France, than in Great Britain.

The armies of France were ſent to America, and there they imbibed principles unfavourable to a deſpotic government, while the progreſs of the war put out of order the finances of the country. France to be ſure humbled her neighbour, but ſhe brought ruin upon herſelf; and her imprudence ought to be a warning to nations, againſt incautiouſly ruſhing into unneceſſary wars, and againſt deſtruc-

deſtructive ſyſtems of politics, which involve the fate of kingdoms in concerns which are unconnected with their internal ſafety and proſperity.

In France, while freſh loans were borrowed every year, the people were deluded by encomiums on the prime miniſter; and it was reported by his agents, that he had diſcovered the ſecret of paying off the debts and burdens of the nation by borrowing; and notwithſtanding the plans and promiſes of the miniſter, and the poverty of the people, the court was never known more brilliant. The immenſe debts of the princes of the royal family were liquidated, penſions were granted with profuſion, and petty ſervice munificently requited.

For the arrangement of public affairs the aſſembly called Notables * met about the beginning of the year 1787, but the Notables not being able to effect that which was deſired, a meeting of what was termed the Eſtates-general was called, and aſſembled; and in 1789 a revolution in France was brought about, which was the beginning of much quarrelling and blood-ſhed.

The States-general of France having aſſembled,

* About this time, I recollect, people in England made a laugh of what was going forward in France. The newſpapers teemed with animadverſions on the imbecility of the great leading men of France; and the aſſembly of the Notables were termed Not-Ables.—Inſtead of ridicule, thankful ought Great Britain to have been, that ſhe through Providence eſcaped being in a ſimilar predicament!

could not agree about the verification of their powers; however, after ſome tumultuous conteſts and propoſitions, a National Aſſembly was formed. This was the firſt ſtep towards the abolition of a legiſlative nobility. The aboliſhment of their feudal rights, on the 4th of Auguſt 1789, may be conſidered as the ſecond. The nobility, after theſe meaſures had been adopted, retained no diſtinction but what was nominal, and it remained to be determined what place they were to occupy in the new order of things relative to the conſtitution. That queſtion was decided in the month of December following. By this deciſion the diſtinction of orders was deſtroyed, the nobility were to form no part of the conſtitution, and they were diveſted of all diſtinction that they enjoyed under the old government, their titles excepted. On the 19th of June 1790 a decree by the National Aſſembly was paſſed for the ſuppreſſion of all titles.

Hitherto, all that had paſſed in France, reſpecting the revolution, was not, by the government of England, thought very dangerous; but when the aſſembly proceeded to extirpate the external ſigns of ranks and diſtinctions, Great Britain and other nations began to reſound with clamours againſt ſuch levelling proceedings.

For ſome time before the revolution in France, there exiſted in London two clubs of gentlemen; the one had named themſelves The Conſtitutional Society; the other, The Revolution Society. Theſe,

Theſe, I am willing to hope, prompted by philanthropy, but I think very imprudently, congratulated the French National Aſſembly, on their atchievements, in having brought about a revolution. I myſelf have not the leaſt heſitation, in declaring that the object which the French appeared to have in view, at the beginning of the revolution, was approved of by the ideas or principles I long ago imbibed, by means of reading and conſidering the hiſtory of men and of nations. Their object, it ſeems, was to free themſelves, and their poſterity, from deſpotic, arbitrary power; and I truſt there are few in Great Britain, ſo little ſenſible of the bleſſings of that free conſtitution, under which they have the happineſs to live, ſo wholly averſe to the intereſts of general humanity, as not to deſire that a conſtitution, ſimilar to our own, both in church and ſtate, might be eſtabliſhed, not only in France but in every deſpotic nation, colony, or iſland, in every quarter of the world. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that it is one thing to approve of an end aimed at, and another to approve of the means by which an end is accompliſhed. Be it known that I did not approve of every mean which was uſed for the accompliſhment of, even, the firſt revolution in France. I imagined that it would have been a more wiſe meaſure, to have leſſened the oppreſſive privileges, and to have curtailed the enormous

number, of the nobility, than to have wholly aboliſhed the order.

In the year 1791, two pamphlets were uſhered into the public; the one, by the right honourable EDMUND BURKE; the other, by THOMAS PAINE. Theſe in my opinion were equally dangerous to the public and private tranquillity, and liberty of Great Britain and France. The one ſerved to foſter and encourage pride, avarice, ambition, and oppreſſion, among the higher orders of ſociety; the other to create envy, diſcontent, murmuring, and ſedition, among the middle and lower ranks of the people. They were ſought after with greedineſs, and read with attention by numbers of all claſſes; and the impreſſion they made on the minds of many, was evident from the multitude of publications, and diſcuſſions, which they excited. And in my individual and private capacity, I undoubtedly took a ſhare, along with the reſt of the world, in ſpeculating on what had been done, or what was doing, in the public theatre. But being a ſubject, and a ſervant, and conſidering myſelf as being bound, by duty, to obey the laws and cuſtoms of my country, in every particular, not evidently contrary to the will and commandments of God, I thought it moſt prudent neither to enter into, or join with, any political meeting, or ſociety whatever; nor to have any correſpondence relative to the politics, religion, cuſtoms, or manners of the times.

No

No ſooner had the diſturbances on account of the revolution, commenced in France, than many of the princes, nobility, and great men emigrated, and took refuge in the neigbouring nations; and in 1792 numbers of the clergy were baniſhed, and came over to England. This was a moſt critical time indeed, and required the joint abilities of the whole nation, to conſult and determine what were the moſt proper and efficacious meaſures, that ought to have been taken. Parliament, however, was not conſulted till the latter end of the year. This, I ſay, was a moſt critical time for Great Britain; becauſe people come and coming daily into it, were not, as in former times, driven from France by religious perſecution, but on account of the political opinions they held, and their behaviour in conſequence of thoſe opinions.

The Britiſh government, it ſeemed, wiſhed to give refuge and free admittance to all who were real friends of monarchy, and to none elſe. My opinion and language, however wrong they might be thought by ſome, were then, and now is, that Great Britain ought at that time either to have acknowledged any form of government ſet up by France, in her own dominions; or elſe barred all direct communications between this and that country—not ſuffering a Frenchman of any deſcription whatever to enter the Britiſh dominions, till a government was eſtabliſhed or ſet up in France, that could be acknowledged and treated with.

This

This doctrine may by ſome be thought too harſh, becauſe perhaps it may be argued that it would be an act of great inhumanity not to permit an oppreſſed part of a neighbouring nation, to take ſhelter under the covert of a powerful humane people. To this I would anſwer, that it is the firſt and predominating principle in man, and the duty of every individual, to take care of his own perſon, and concerns, by all the lawful means the Almighty has been pleaſed to put in his power:—and I conceive it to be no leſs the duty of thoſe, to whom the affairs of government are entruſted, to take care of the nation, by uſing every lawful mean in their power to defend its liberties, religious and civil; and to preſerve it, by every juſt expedient, from being inundated with a people who are as likely to inſtill into the minds of others principles ſubverſive of that true religion which is profeſſed, and no doubt poſſeſſed, by many belonging not only to the eſtabliſhed church, but alſo to various ſects of diſſenters; as they are to inſtill into the minds of the people principles ſubverſive of all good order and good government.

Had not the French emigrants received much encouragement from the ſurrounding nations, probably ſo many of them would not have forſaken their own country; but would have ſtayed at home, and ſubmitted to the majority for a time, till by their influence among the people, they could have been able, by moderation and good conduct, to bring

bring about a ſyſtem of government likely to adminiſter juſtice to all, and give the people tolerable ſatisfaction. It is to be feared, the exaggerated accounts given by many of the diſcontented emigrants, was the means of bringing about much ſtrife and bloodſhed.

There is not a pariſh in England will ſuffer the poor and diſcontented, of any other pariſh, to become chargeable to it, nor will one pariſh allow another to be judge and regulator of it's internal concerns, relative to the management of it's poor and refractory: conſequently how cautious ought one powerful nation to be of pretending to become the judge and ſettler of thoſe differences which may happen between the people and government of a nation as powerful as itſelf. And moreover how difficult a matter do we find it to come at the truth of affairs of diſcord, which come to paſs in our own country? How much more difficult, then, muſt it be to aſcertain the merits or demerits of actions and tranſactions which occur in the midſt of a powerful nation, containing upwards of twenty millions of people?

In the year 1792, I beheld with ſome degree of remorſe, a courſe of conduct defuſing itſelf through Great Britain, which according to my idea of things, I could by no means approve of. It appeared to be purſuing a mode of behaviour, animated with a ſpirit indicating a diſpoſition not very favourable to the cauſe and intereſt of the Proteſtant reformed religion.

ligion. It expreſſed great anxiety for the ſafety and preſervation of the conſtitution—for the upholding and maintaining of the different orders and eſtabliſhments of men in church and ſtate—It indicated much fear that the minds of it's ſubjects, through the example of France, and the ingreſs into England of it's inhabitants, tinctured with republican or democratical principles, might be alienated from juſt and equitable views of their allegiance towards their lawful ſovereign, and from their duty towards their ſuperiors and governors; but it did not ſeem in the leaſt apprehenſive that their minds were in the ſmalleſt danger of being alienated from true religion and morality, by the ingreſs of multitudes of foreigners, profeſſing that mode of religion and worſhip which Great Britain has proteſted againſt as being falſe and erroneous.

What I have already related, are ſome of the topics of converſation brought up in company where my buſineſs and occupation neceſſarily introduced me; and happening to be more learned than ſome farmers, dealers in corn, and upper ſervants, my ſuperior knowledge in ſome things might perhaps be conſtrued, by the envious, into an approbation of the proceedings of the French nation. In Auguſt 1792, an affair occurred, which doubtleſs tended to confirm ſuch in their opinion. It was the following:

In the beginning of the harveſt, a conſtable, more zealous in his office than wiſe, had called on an afternoon

ternoon and marked a waggon under my management, and left notice with a labourer that without fail it muſt be at the place appointed next morning at a certain hour. Conſidering it not a time of war, and as I much wanted the team at home that day, I reſolved not to ſend. Nearly a month afterwards, without any previous application, from a conſtable I received the following ſummons, ſigned by two juſtices of the peace.

"To all conſtables, and other his majeſty's officers of the peace for the county of ——, whom theſe may concern, Theſe are in His Majeſty's name to command you forthwith, upon ſight hereof, to ſummon —— —— perſonally to be and appear before us, and ſuch other of His Majeſty's juſtices of the peace for the ſaid county, as will be preſent, at the Greyhound Inn in ——, on Monday the 10th day of September next, to anſwer the complaint of the conſtables made againſt him for refuſing and neglecting, after due notice by them to him given, to provide and furniſh one waggon, with horſes and men, to remove the arms, &c. of His Majeſty's regiment of Light Dragoons, commanded by General Pitt, from ——, and ſhew cauſe why the penalty of Forty Shillings, by him forfeited for ſuch offence, ſhould not be levied on his goods and chattels, by diſtreſs and ſale thereof. Hereof fail not. Given under our hands and ſeals this 13th day of Auguſt, 1792."

In conformity to this, I attended at the place appointed;

pointed*; where was only one juſtice of the peace, and the pariſh attorney ſeated beſide him. The juſtice aſked me ſome queſtions, which I anſwered. The attorney‡ ſaid it was time ſomething ſhould be done. I aſked him, If he was a juſtice of the peace? He ſaid, He was not; but that he was aſſiſting the juſtice. I told him, I would be glad if he would let the juſtice ſettle it himſelf. The juſtice then took a book (I think Burn's Juſtice) and read. The conſtable attending gave an account of marking the waggon, and I attempted to ſhew cauſe againſt being fined; but I was interrupted, and the attorney ſaid I ought to be fined. I laid down on the table two guineas, and a two penny ſtamp, and aſked for a receipt. The juſtice flew into a paſſion, and ſaid he would acquaint my maſter of my impertinence. I replied he might uſe his freedom, as I did not think it was much impertinence to aſk for a receipt on the payment of forty ſhillings. He ordered me out of the room, and I took up my two guineas, and obeyed him.

Nevertheleſs I ſoon after received a meſſage, deſiring me to attend a bench of juſtices on the 14th

* It was the firſt time I ever was called before a juſtice, or before a court of juſtice, excepting the court of conſcience.

‡ This attorney was a buſy man, and wiſhed to carry the affairs of the pariſh all his own way; and being poſſeſſed of ſome conſiderable property, he for a time did ſo. He was alſo in oppoſition to miniſtry; and as I ſometimes oppoſed his meaſures and conduct, he was no friend of mine.

of

of September; but inſtead of attending, I ſent the following in writing:—"Sir, as I cannot attend the bench of juſtices to day, without neglecting my maſter's buſineſs, I have here incloſed my defence in writing, and will be obliged to you if you pleaſe to read it to them."—"The day before the marching of the troops from ——, about eight o'clock in the evening, the carter came to me, and ſaid a man named —— came to him in the afternoon, and aſked him where the waggon was, and that he ſhewed him where it ſtood; and that he —— went and rubbed ſome chalk on it, and told him it was preſſed, and he muſt be with it at —— to morrow morning at five o'clock to remove the ſoldiers baggage from there. This was the only notice I had, and which I conceived not to be due notice, but arbitrary notice. I therefore told the carter not to go without my order. With regard to notice, I am of opinion that a conſtable ought to ſhew his warrant, or at leaſt ſay he is a conſtable, and has a warrant. The act ſays that they ſhould be allowed ſufficient time to appoint carriages, that the neighbouring parts may not always bear the burthen. There are, I underſtand, ſeveral within the precinct who have carriages, yet have not been appointed to do part of the buſineſs for ſeveral years. It would ſeem but reaſonable that thoſe who keep waggons ought to be appointed in their turns.

"As ordered, I appeared at the Grey-hound Inn in ——, on the 10th inſtant, before a juſtice of the peace,

peace, and Mr. ——— the lawyer, and without permitting me to ſpeak in my own defence againſt a fine being levied, they were of opinion that a fine ought to be levied, and that half of it ſhould be paid to a perſon with whom the conſtables had previouſly bargained, promiſing him half the fine if he with his waggon would help to remove the ſoldiers arms and accoutrements. Although I conceived theſe proceedings contrary to the expreſs act of parliament, yet I conſented to pay the fine, on condition that they would give a receipt for it; however, on this offer, I was called an impertinent fellow, and ordered to quit the room. The levying of fines determinable by juſtices of the peace, although allowed by act of parliament, ſeems contrary to the great charter, which ſays, that a man ſhould be tried by his equals *. It therefore behoves juſtices of the peace, in levying fines, ſtrictly to adhere to thoſe acts of parliament which ſeat them in the place of both judge and jury."

A few days after this, two conſtables preſented to my maſter copies of the above mentioned warrant and declaration; and he very mildly deſired me to wait on the juſtices, whenever they deſired me, and conform to their determination; accordingly, agreeable to deſire, on the 25th of September, I attended a bench of juſtices; when the one I had

* I meant a jury.

before

before waited on, aſked what I had to ſay in my own defence. I replied, nothing but what I had delivered on a former day in writing; and that I was ready to conform to their deciſion. He deſired me to pay down two guineas; which I did, and ſaid, Gentlemen, I hope you will give me leave to obſerve, that this fine ought not to be diſpoſed of according to the bargain of the conſtables; for the act of parliament ſays it is to be given to the poor of the pariſh. The before mentioned juſtice ſaid, They wanted none of my information.

Whether right or wrong, I was not ſatisfied with all the proceedings reſpecting this affair; firſt, becauſe the act ſays ſuch matters are to be "determined by two juſtices dwelling in or near to the place." Secondly, the juſtice ought not to have ſuffered himſelf to have been prejudiced in the affair, by any perſon, much leſs by an attorney, who had in ſeveral inſtances manifeſted his prejudice againſt me, and him whom I have the honour to ſerve; and, Thirdly, levying two guineas was more than is allowed by the expreſs act of parliament.

In conſequence of theſe conſiderations, I determined to let the juſtice know that there is a legal court of juſtice, full as arbitrary (and I believe adminiſters juſtice to it's applicants with full as much good temper and equity) as that at which he ſeems to preſide. I therefore ſummoned him to appear

before the court of requeſts, commonly called the court of conſcience.

This, I ſuppoſe, ſtartled the juſtice; for a few days after he waited on my maſter, and gave him an account of my miſconduct; and that he would be forced to appear before the court of conſcience. Conſequently, I was reprimanded, and deſired to go and make an apology to the magiſtrate; but conceiving his conduct blameable as well as my own, and being impregnated with the ſame ſort of pride as his, I was extremely unwilling to condeſcend to make any ſort of apology. I therefore concluded to let the matter reſt till the laſt moment.

The day being come when the magiſtrate and me were to make our appearance before the tribunal—the buſineſs of the court having commenced—the magiſtrate at the inn ready to attend if required—his agent and myſelf in our reſpective places—the trial juſt going to begin—I informed the preſident that the affair was ſettled. Thus ended the diſpute, and the anxiouſly looked for trial, which diſappointed a pretty large audience, partly convened to hear the trial of the, for any thing I know, worthy magiſtrate. Shortly after this, however, it was whiſpered in the neighbourhood that I was tinctured with democratical principles; but I believe it was by ſome of thoſe who, I am credibly informed, knew not that one of the branches of the Britiſh legiſlature is legally a partaker of that epithet.

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In and round London, about this time, meetings and ſocieties were formed and held; ſome of them pretending that they meant to bring about, in a peaceable way, a reform in parliament: others I believe met chiefly for ſociality—for the gratification of ſome of their natural propenſities—to ſmoke a pipe, and drink ſtrong beer. Nevertheleſs, whatever might be their real motives, it is to be feared ſome of them were beginning to take ſuch ſteps, as might in a ſhort time prove dangerous to the liberties and good government of this realm. For the people of a nation to convene in bodies, in different diſtricts, and declare their opinion concerning public affairs, and diſperſe and go about their reſpective avocations peaceably, I think cannot be dangerous, but on the contrary may be the means of bringing about meaſures productive of public good; but to hold ſtated meetings, not authorized, nor clearly ſanctioned by the legiſlature, for the purpoſe of finding out and accuſing thoſe as being dangerous ſubjects, who may differ from government in political ſpeculative opinions, is, I think, dangerous and unwiſe; and for people to aſſociate intentionally to break the laws, or to bring about by force a reform in parliament, needs but little comment to convince every well meaning man of the danger, unlawfulneſs, and imprudence of ſuch aſſociations.

In the town near which I reſide, a club for ſome

time had exiſted. The whole deſign of the members of this club, as far as I know, was to ſmoke their pipe, and drink beer, for their own pleaſure; and as ſome of them ſaid "for the good of the publican," he being a very civil ſort of a man, and to read the newſpaper. The paper they choſe was that called the Times; and for the defraying the expences thereof they, as I underſtood, ſubſcribed one penny weekly. They began too to buy ſome books, Brookes's Gazetteer was the only one which to my knowledge they purchaſed; a preſent, however, of PAINE's Rights of Man, was ſent them, but by whom they did not know. This created ſome diviſions among them; and a day or two after, their preſident, a tradeſman of no very extenſive buſineſs, called on me to ſhow a ſample of oats; and entering into ſome converſation with him, he informed me that he had reſigned his office of preſidency. On the evening of the ſame day, without the leaſt intention of ever joining this club, but chiefly to hear what they would ſay, I wrote them the following addreſs:—"Gentlemen, being informed of the reſignation of your worthy preſident —I beg leave to offer myſelf a candidate to ſucceed him in that important office; ſhould I have the honour of being choſen, I ſhall ever retain the higheſt ſenſe of gratitude, and exert my abilities for the good of the nation in general, and for the rights of the ſociety in particular. I have the honour to be, &c." to which, a few days afterwards, I received

the

the following anſwer.—" Sir, I have this day received the pleaſure of peruſing yours relative to the ſociety of which I have the honour to be a member. The friendly ſentiments contained therein, demand our warmeſt acknowledgements. I already enjoy the pleaſure of your company by anticipation. The exertions of your abilities for the good of the nation ſhall be ſeconded by every aſſiſtance in my power. It may not be amiſs to give you a ſhort account of the ſociety. It aſſembles weekly on Tueſday evenings in convention, when that office you ſo ardently deſire, the preſidency, is exerciſed; and with us is not as in the kingdom of Poland elective; or as in England, hereditary; neither is it after the manner of Congreſs; but it is progreſſive, by a cuſtom peculiar to ourſelves: and you may further depend on the utmoſt ſtretch of my intereſt to render your exaltation agreeable. As the limits of my time and paper will not permit me to be more comprehenſive in the information, ſuffer me to aſſure you that in the mean time I remain, &c."—About the ſame time I received another ſhort letter, the contents of which were, " Dear Sir, I have lately ſeen a letter from you to the —— club, which I cannot help thinking, if you was ſerious, was very imprudent, as it will certainly come to —— ears, ſome way or other, and moſt likely give offence. From my friendſhip to you, I would therefore adviſe you to give out, that it was a matter of fun and amuſement, and nothing more. I am, &c."

In the month of November 1792, a ſociety of a new deſcription was formed. The avowed intention of the members of it was to counteract the deſigns of thoſe clubs and ſocieties previouſly formed for the purpoſe, as they ſaid, of bringing about a reform. But whatever might be the real motives of the firſt formed ones, this new ſociety, which met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, London, ſtigmatiſes them thus—"To aſſemble in the forms they do, is always ſeditious, and very often treaſonable: they all appear to be offenders againſt the law."

In imitation and in conformity to the recommendation of this newly formed ſociety, the ci-devant preſident, whom I mentioned in page 38, and ſome others of his public-houſe companions, in oppoſition to the club from which they had lately ſeceded, formed themſelves into a new ſociety, and this hot-headed ci-devant, became poſſeſſed of the full preſidency thereof, and appointed an inexperienced young man ſecretary. Being thus formed, their firſt reſolution was, That they ſhould become a Society, with the name of Conſtitutional, aſſociated for preſerving liberty and property againſt levellers, republicans, and French politics. They opened a ſubſcription—advertiſed, and deſired letters of communication to be directed to the ſecretary.

For my own part, I believe the inhabitants of the neighbourhood were then, and are now, as loyal and well affected to the conſtitution, both in church and ſtate, as the inhabitants of any diſtrict in the kingdom;

dom; nor did I ever hear of, or ſee any act of diſloyalty among them, excepting that of three or four tradeſmen, of rather vulgar behaviour, who it was ſaid met one evening at a public houſe, got drunk, gave ſome ſeditious toaſts, and deſired a ſoldier to follow their very improper example. The only puniſhment they underwent was, ſome gentlemen threatened to withdraw their cuſtom from them; whereas I was inclined to think that the law ſhould have been put in force againſt them; that is, to have inflicted ſuch puniſhment on them as the exiſting laws authorize in ſimilar caſes of drunkenneſs and ſwearing.

Not, however, to deviate too far from my relation of the proceedings of the members of the Conſtitutional Society, after having finiſhed the buſineſs of the firſt evening's meeting, which was begun, accompanied, and ended with full foaming tankards of the beſt London porter, and home brewed ale, they were actuated with principles more magnanimous, and more favourable to the general intereſt and welfare of the fraternity of publicans, than their brethren of the Crown and Anchor; for they paſſed a decree as irreverſible, for any thing I know, as that of the Medes and Perſians, never to meet in convocation at the ſame public houſe twice following.

At the out-ſet too, of this ſociety, I had almoſt forgot to mention, THOMAS PAINE in effigy was borne through the ſtreets in triumph, exalted high above the heads of the ſurrounding populace, vociferating

ferating their victorious exploits over the grand luminous oppoſer of the mighty powerful expoſer of the political wrongs of the French people, and placed on a pile of inflammables, which being ſet in a blaze, reduced the victim to aſhes, amid the huzza's of the triumphant conquerors.

A ſubſequent meeting of the ſaid ſociety was attended by clergymen and gentlemen of fortune and reſpectability; and to the no ſmall pleaſure of the members of the club which he had ſome time before reſigned the preſidency, the ſame man was ſeated in the chair by the voice of the majority, but rather, as I am informed, contrary to the wiſh of the gentlemen of fortune and learning, that ſat round beholding the low ſit in the higheſt place of the aſſembly *.

The forms of the opening of the meeting being over, the ſecretary began reading to the audience the letters of his correſpondents; and an anonymous one, which evidently alluded to me, contain-

* This put me in mind of the following paſſage in the work of a great man, "There is an evil which I have ſeen under the ſun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler, Folly is ſet in great dignity, and the rich ſit in low place. I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, and princes walking as ſervants upon the earth;" which may be explained thus—Too frequently to the leſſening of the dignity of a nation, and the hurt of it's ſubjects, do magiſtrates appoint as their agents and deputies, perſons of a weak mercenary turn of mind, while men of ability and true dignity are overlooked and contemned.

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ing accuſations of a criminating nature, was brought forward and read, but by the interference of the gentlemen, and ſenſible part of the aſſembly, it was ordered to be burnt. At this meeting a motion was made and decreed, "That it be recommended to every member of this ſociety to take the oath of allegiance:" and at a ſubſequent one, held by adjournment, "The attendance of every loyal ſubject was required." To accompliſh theſe reſolutions, the attendance of a juſtice of the peace was deemed neceſſary. In conſequence of which the magiſtrate which I have noticed in page 33 was applied to; but he would not conſent to attend, unleſs the cuſtomary fees for adminiſtering oaths were paid. The preſident of the ſociety, or his agent, therefore, made application to another magiſtrate, who "generouſly gave his attendance to adminiſter the oath of allegiance, free of expence." This piece of buſineſs concerning the taking the oath of allegiance, was by many ſenſible people deemed a matter of mere futility. No great number, therefore, became conformable to the ſociety's decree. Some, however, complied for fear, and others, more properly, on account of watching the motions and ſounding the principles and motives of the firſt promoters of the ſociety.

About this time, I underſtood, notice came to the ſociety, from the Crown and Anchor ſociety, that a perſon of dangerous principles reſided in the neighbourhood; and indeed an advertiſement appeared

appeared in the Times, diſcovering the man, and declaring, that if the aſſociation would advertiſe, he the advertiſer would then come forward and make good the charge. A meeting of the aſſociation was ſoon after held, and the accuſed deſired to attend, which he did; and after undergoing an examination, he agreed to advertiſe and challenge his accuſer to come forward: this was done; but the anonymous and apparently malicious calumniator thought proper not to hazard making himſelf known. However ſome of the members of the aſſociation being rather jealous of the ſoundneſs of the principles of the accuſed perſon, he was at different times interrogated; till at length a member moved, that they ought not to trouble him any farther, and as the accuſer was aſhamed to diſcover himſelf, he was acquitted.

Thus have I related ſome of the proceedings of an aſſociation, formed in the neighbourhood in which I have reſided, in one place, in the capacity of a ſervant, nearly eleven years.

Neither the apparent motives of this aſſociation in its formation, nor all its actions when formed, and in motion, can I be reconciled with; becauſe I know of no act of parliament which directly authorizes ſuch; therefore I conſidered and do conſider it to be a moſt dangerous precedent for people in ſuch circumſtances, unauthorized by any exiſting law, to aſſemble and publicly declare either for or againſt

againſt the politics of a powerful neighbouring nation.

The people and conſtitution of Great Britain has entruſted the affairs of the nation to the legiſlature, and from the legiſlature proceeds government; and the members which conſtitute government are appointed by one of the three branches of this legiſlature. It is the duty of the legiſlature and government to command the people to do right, and to keep them from wrong; but the people have no right to command the one or the other. Nevertheleſs, as the legiſlature and government are liable to do wrong, the people have an undoubted right to petition them to do always that which is right. They, however, ſhould be extremely careful not to petition or influence them to do wrong; for if they do, they become partakers of the ſin. Whenever two nations go to war with one another, one or the other, and perhaps both, moſt undoubtedly muſt be guilty of high crimes. Whether the preſent war on the ſide of Great Britain be juſt and neceſſary, or unjuſt and unneceſſary, is what I never did, nor do I pretend to be, capable of determining. On this very account therefore I could not approve of thoſe aſſociations, which ſtirred up and encouraged this nation to go to war. I could have had no objection to have met peaceably and quietly, and declared my approbation of the Britiſh conſtitution; but to do any act, or make any declaration, which evidently

evidently tended to irritate and ſtir up Great Britain and France againſt one another, ſo as to be the means of producing a dreadful cataſtrophe, I could by no means agree to. Thoſe men of much learning and talents, who are members of government, and of both houſes of parliament, and who may juſtly be ſuppoſed to be well acquainted with, and verſed in, the regulations of trade, commerce, the balance of power, &c. have doubts about the juſtice and injuſtice of entering into war; how careful therefore ought the middle and lower claſſes of ſociety to be of determining either for or againſt a queſtion of ſo much importance?

However, as ſuch digreſſions may tend to make me loſe ſight of the ſubject which I meant my narrative to lead me to, which was to give an account of my being repreſented to the ſecretary of ſtate, as a perſon of dangerous principles, I ſhall immediately return to my hiſtory.

I think it was about the latter end of January or beginning of February, 1793, that I happened to be tranſacting ſome buſineſs in the neareſt market town, and being detained beyond my uſual dinner time, I went to a public houſe * to dine in company with ſeveral farmers. The preſident of the

* Thoſe who are acquainted with me know that, according to the vulgar ſaying, "I am no friend to the publicans," for I ſeldom frequent thoſe houſes, unleſs it be to tranſact buſineſs which is neceſſary.

aſſocia-

aſſociation perceiving this, thought it, I imagine, a favourable opportunity to attack me, and immediately from the market-houſe followed after, and without ceremony ſeated himſelf at the table, nearly oppoſite me, and ſoon began to aſk me political queſtions, in order, inſtantly I concluded, to ſound my principles, or rather to draw from me words to enable him to make good the alledged charge of democracy. Among other queries (the king of France being then in cloſe confinement) he aſked me what I thought would be the iſſue of the proceedings of the French national aſſembly againſt him? I ſaid I was of opinion they would bring him to trial. He ſaid, He differed from me, for he thought they would let the mob maſſacre him, and then, to ſcreen themſelves from the imputation of murder, ſay that they could not prevent it. But, anſwered I, ſuppoſing it to happen as you think it will, it would by no means free them of being partakers of the atrocious deed. On this, the preſident flew into a violent paſſion, and exclaimed, that he knew the laws as well, if not better than I did: he alſo ſaid that a man of my deſcription ought not to be kept in the ſervice of my maſter. More converſation, but, if poſſible, of ſtill leſs conſequence than this was brought forward. There were I think about thirty people preſent, and excepting the perſon already mentioned, all appeared humorous, jovial, and pleaſant; and being well acquainted with the natural temper of the man, his reflec-

reflections thrown on me, and my employer, did not, to the beſt of my recollection, give my mind the leaſt uneaſineſs *.

On the 19th of February 1793, I received the following:—" The incloſed is the copy of a letter which has been written to the ſecretary of ſtate; and I have reaſon to think it relates to you. You will ſee thereby, that by your abſurd conduct and converſation, you bring me into diſcredit. I have no doubt that this account of your behaviour is much exaggerated; but I have learned from other quarters, on which I can rely, that you hold language very improper. I can only ſay, therefore, that unleſs your conduct is in future more proper, and guarded, you will put me under the neceſſity, for my own ſake, of diſmiſſing you." The incloſed contained as follows:—

" Extract of a letter to Mr. Secretary of State:"

" Sir, A domeſtic ſervant in the family of ——— is in principles a dangerous democrat. His name as yet I have been unable to diſcover, tho' I am told he is a favourite, and high in the houſhold ſtation."

The reception of theſe ſtartled me; for I conſidered that a power was now lodged in the hands of miniſtry to impriſon whoever they thought dangerous. Therefore, though I was not conſcious

* Some days after, by ſome of the company, I was congratulated for having been able to keep my temper.

of

of having violated any of the laws of the realm, yet I might be impriſoned during the pleaſure of government, and tried not only for ſedition, but even for high treaſon. After ſome more conſideration, however, I ſat down and wrote the following letter——

"February 19th, 1793."

"This morning I received the honour of your letter of yeſterday, with a copy of that written to the ſecretary of ſtate. You muſt be the beſt judge whether or not that information is applicable to me. I am conſcious that the aim of my conduct, and the tendency of my language, has been, and I truſt ever will be, for peace and regularity; and my principles are theſe—That men ought to fear God, and honour the king; and that reſpect and honour is due to every one, in their different and reſpective ſtations;—and that it is the bounden duty of every perſon to be obedient to the laws of their country.

"Ever ſince I entered your ſervice, the anonymous voice and pen of the malevolent have often been lifted up againſt me; and of this you are not ignorant: but I hope that your candour, and my behaviour, will yet diſappoint their malicious deſigns. I ſhall be extremely ſorry to be diſmiſſed from your ſervice, eſpecially for being ſuppoſed "a dangerous democrat:" you may therefore be aſſured that I ſhall take the greateſt heed to what I ſay, and how I act. I am, &c."

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It appears to me ſome miſtake had been made, in ſending me the above notice. The letter ſays, the incloſed is a copy; but on that which is called the copy is written "Extract." The letter too hints at ſomething more extenſive than the incloſed. The miſtake, probably, happened with the clerks. But be theſe things as they may, I conſider the letter to the Secretary of State nothing leſs than a moſt dangerous diabolical libel. It indicts a perſon not for his words or actions, but for his principles or thoughts. I conſider myſelf accountable for my words and actions, not only to God, but alſo to man; but for my principles, or the thoughts of my heart, I conſider myſelf accountable to none but God alone.

I could make many obſervations on the libel, and on the letter; but I ſhall confine myſelf to few. I conſider the letter as being very favourable to me, inaſmuch as "open rebuke is better than ſecret love." To tell men plainly of their faults, and rebuke and reprove them freely, is, I am of opinion, a far more valuable piece of kindneſs, than the ſtrongeſt hidden affection. It is far better, and more wiſe, prudent, and commendable, for government, and maſters of families, to reprove, and try to reform, ſubjects and ſervants; and to endeavour to prevent them from breaking the laws, and from committing faults; than it is to puniſh them when they have tranſgreſſed, though puniſhment is too frequently neceſſary.

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There is a cuſtom takes place too frequently among maſters of families, which I apprehend is very injurious to the community, and therefore ought to be laid aſide. They diſcharge their domeſtics, without telling them the reaſon, and conſequently without endeavouring to reform them. Should this be read by any who follow that practice, let them well weigh the letter of my employer, here inſerted; they will therein ſee that he was, by ſome information or other, led to conceive me guilty of a fault; yet was generous enough to acquaint me thereof, and condeſcend to allow me time for reflection and reformation. And if any domeſtic ſervant, or even labourer, chance to read this narration, let them take an example of not being too raſhly offended, or affronted with their maſters, for finding fault with and threatening of them.

"Servants be obedient to them that are your maſters according to the fleſh, with fear and trembling, in ſingleneſs of heart, as unto Chriſt; not with eye-ſervice, as men pleaſers, but as the ſervants of Chriſt, doing the will of God from the heart; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye maſters, do the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing alſo that your maſter is in heaven, neither is there reſpect of perſons with him." PAUL. And in another place the ſame great man ſays,

"Exhort ſervants to be obedient unto their own maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again;" which laſt paragraph may be explained thus—Be diligent and careful to teach and inſtruct converted ſervants, that it is their duty as much as ever, and from better principles to behave towards their maſters in the moſt obliging diligent manner, cheerfully executing their commands without murmuring or diſputing, and never returning any ſaucy or inſolent anſwer when reproved or ordered to work.

Had there been nothing to excite a ſuſpicion of my being the ſervant aimed at beſides the imputation of being "a favourite," I apprehend there would not have been the leaſt jealouſy entertained of my being "a dangerous democrat." If the word "favourite" means a confidential ſervant, I freely confeſs my ambition runs high, not to attain the name, but the very eſſence or ſubſtance of the thing: but if it means a perſon full of flattery, and ſubmiſſive to all the commands of a maſter, whether right or wrong, I deteſt not only the name but alſo the actions of thoſe to whom it is applicable. From this declaration of mine it may be inferred that my opinion is that ſervants and labourers ought to receive as much learning and inſtruction as to enable them to know diſtinctly their duty to God, and their duty to man; and that government, heads of families, and individuals, but particularly the miniſters of religion, are very culpable

culpable if they ſuffer thoſe under their immediate inſpection to remain ignorant of the firſt principles of morality and religion. But inſtead of this what a remiſſneſs do we ſee among all claſſes of the members of ſociety!

Had no other information been given or obtained of my conduct beſides the extract of the letter to the Secretary of State, ſtill it is moſt likely blame would have fallen on me on account of circumſtances which I have not yet mentioned.

The ſervants belonging to the family in which I live, when they attend any place of worſhip, all, except two of the Roman catholic perſuaſion, (and the Papiſts, it ſeems, are now-a-days in their principles and actions thought not in the leaſt dangerous to the Britiſh conſtitution, either in church or ſtate) go to the eſtabliſhed church; but I conſtantly attend thoſe places of worſhip which are commonly called Methodiſt meetings, and the people Whitefieldlights. My reaſon for frequenting theſe in preference to the eſtabliſhed church is not becauſe I think its forms or ceremonies ſinful, but rather becauſe I am not within reach of a church where I think the goſpel is preached in its purity; for I am ſorry to ſay, when I attend the neareſt eſtabliſhed church, I hear the preacher read one doctrine in the deſk, and another in the pulpit. This is my opinion.

Now we know that by many members of government, and by the generality of the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, it is thought the diſſenters are in general not well affected to the conſtitution: on this account therefore it is moſt natural to imagine that ſuſpicion would fall on me, even though the Whitefieldlights are deemed not ſo averſe to the forms of the eſtabliſhed church as many other diſſenting ſects. This leads me to my third propoſition, which was, to "make religious, moral, philoſophical, and political miſcellaneous obſervations, exhibiting my principles on theſe ſubjects, in reference to and excited by the annexed hints, obſervations," &c. And as my principles and ideas concerning theſe have been chiefly formed by reading of and meditating on the contents of that book called the Bible, which, ſince the tranſlation and reviſion it underwent by learned, diligent, godly men, between the years 1604 and 1607, has been univerſally uſed by all parties in Great Britain, I ſhall begin by giving the reaſons why I am fully perſuaded it contains a revelation of the will of God towards mankind.

It appears to me that the ſubject matter contained in it, and which is commonly called the Old and New Teſtaments, could not have been known without a direct communication or revelation from a ſuperior being. It is impoſſible that the hiſtory of the creation could ever have been known to any

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of the human race but by a revelation thereof from the Creator. The myſteries relative to the trinity of the Godhead, the covenant of grace, the incarnation of the Son of God, his undertakings and offices, and the union of a part of fallen men with him; juſtification, adoption, ſpiritual comfort, and eternal bleſſedneſs in him are declared therein; which could be comprehended or diſcovered by none other but God himſelf. So pure and benevolent is the ſcheme of religion which is therein preſcribed, that God only could deviſe or appoint it; for while it repreſents the Almighty as every where preſent, as infinitely good, powerful, perfect, wiſe, juſt, holy, and true, an infinitely gracious lover of righteouſneſs, and hater of iniquity, as our bountiful creator and preſerver, and as the moſt merciful redeemer of the guilty ſouls of men by the obedience and death of his only Son, it requires us to know, believe in, and revere him with our whole heart, mind, ſoul, and ſtrength, as our father, friend, and portion in Chriſt; and to depend on him confidently, and to aſk from him whatever we want in time or eternity, and to obey him in all that he commands, as children whom he hath begotten again unto a lively hope, and eſtabliſhed as the heirs of his everlaſting inheritance. The bible teaches men how human nature may in reality be improved and perfected by receiving Jeſus Chriſt as made of God unto them wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and

redemption, as an effectual principle and root of true holineſs, and by their walking in him by faith, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and living ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly.

In the ſcriptures we are taught to love our neighbours as ourſelves, fulfilling the duties of every relative ſtation, and to lay aſide all malice, envy, revenge, hatred, or other malevolent diſpoſitions or paſſions—to love our enemies, to render good for evil, bleſſing for curſing, and to pray for them that deſpitefully uſe us. Theſe laws of univerſal philanthropy, benevolence, and purity, are preſcribed with an authority proper to God only, and extended to ſuch a compaſs and degree as God alone can demand: and thoſe ſins are forbidden which God only can obſerve or prohibit. The moſt powerful diſſuaſives from vice, and motives to duty, are in the bible moſt wiſely propoſed and powerfully urged; and while excellent means of directing and exciting to, and of putting in practice, piety and virtue, are eſtabliſhed in the moſt prudent forms and authoritative manner, the moſt perfect and engaging patterns of holineſs are evidently ſet before us in the example of Jeſus Chriſt, and of God, as reconciled in him, and reconciling the world to himſelf.

Although the dictates of the bible are very contradictory to the natural inclinations of men, and were publiſhed without any concert, by various perſons of different conditions, ſome rich and ſome poor;

poor; and in different places and ages; yet ſuch is the wonderful harmony of the various parts in their whole ſcope and matter, as without contradiction demonſtrates that the writers of its contents muſt have all been directed by the ſame Spirit of God. To one who ſearches the ſcriptures diligently, they will no doubt occaſion a very pleaſant aſtoniſhment, for there is to be found every where the ſame facts ſuppoſed, related, or propoſed; the ſame doctrines of a gracious redemption through Jeſus Chriſt exhibited by types or figures; the ſame exemplifications or rules of piety and virtue, and motives thereunto; the ſame promiſes of mercy, or threatenings of juſt puniſhment to perſons, ſocieties, or nations, held forth without a ſingle contradiction. When there ſeems to be a contradiction, it will be found that the different paſſages do not reſpect the ſame perſon or thing in the ſame reſpect, and in the ſame circumſtances of time, place, or manner.

What further demonſtrates the divine original of the ſcriptures, is the character of the writers of them. In every part do they diſcover the greateſt candour and diſintereſtedneſs—never did any of them gain any thing in this world but vexation and trouble: they have in every part candidly publiſhed the infirmities and faults of themſelves, of their friends, and of their nation. Not to mention their predictions, how could men of the beſt education, and particularly men of little or no

education, form ſuch exalted ſchemes of ſenſe, virtue, and piety; or how could wicked men publiſh and proſecute ſuch a ſcheme of myſtery, holineſs, and morality.

It appears clear and evident, that the whole ſcope of the contents of the bible is to render ſin abominable and deteſtable, and to promote righteouſneſs, holineſs, and virtue—to humble men, and to reform and reclaim them from their evil ſinful practices, and to exalt and glorify God. Surely no good angel, or man, could dare to perſonate God in the manner of the ſcriptures; nor is it at all probable that bad angels, or men, could publiſh or inculcate ſo warmly what is ſo remarkably contrary and averſe to their own vicious, depraved inclinations. It therefore evidently appears, that God only muſt be the author and inditer of them. It is clear, however, that many of the ſentences recorded in ſcripture are not inſpired in themſelves, being the words of the devil, or of wicked men; but the ſcripture report, relative to theſe expreſſions, is directed no doubt by divine inſpiration.

One more proof may be brought forward, to evince that the ſcriptures are a revelation of the will of God to man. In whatever nation, or part of a nation, the bible is diligently read, there a wonderful reform is produced among the inhabitants, in regard to religion and morality.

By many, and even by men of great abilities and great

great learning, all who frequent conventicles, or religious meetings, of whatever ſect or denomination, beſides that of the eſtabliſhed church, are conſidered as not being friendly to the Britiſh conſtitution. That this is evidently the caſe, appears, firſt from the many pamphlets and ſermons publiſhed in the preſent times; and, ſecondly, from the teſt act being ſtill kept in force.

A ſermon lately publiſhed by the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM, I ſhall here take particular notice of, becauſe it is moſtly dedicated to the inveſtigation of the principles, practice, and aims of thoſe that are called Methodiſts, and in throwing reflections on them, as well as on many reſpectable members of ſociety, included in the eſtabliſhed churches of England and Scotland. The ſermon I have in view, before it was publiſhed, was preached at the viſitation of the biſhop, holden at Borowbridge, in Yorkſhire, September 2, 1794. And had this ſermon been confined to religious matters only, perhaps it would have been impertinent in me to have made any animadverſions on it. But as the author is of opinion, that the tenets openly profeſſed by thoſe addicted to what is called Methodiſm, are not only erroneous in reſpect to religion, but have alſo a dangerous tendency to diſturb the harmony, peace, and tranquillity of the Britiſh empire; and as I frequent either the aſſemblies of thoſe called Whitefieldlights, or of thoſe who hold, as far as I know, the ſame religious tenets or principles; I ſhall endeavour

deavour to ſhow that what they profeſs, relative to religion, is not only not dangerous, but has been, and I truſt will be, a great ſupport to the Britiſh conſtitution.

After having expatiated on the dangerous tendency of religious ſects and parties, Mr. CLAPHAM ſays, "I cannot but call to their ſerious recollection the havock which faction, combined with impiety, has made in the public inſtitutions and private morals of a neighbouring country. I cannot but remind them, that the doctrines and manners of the church were moſt fiercely arraigned by the ſame wretches, who in the mad career of their crimes, have trampled upon the croſs of Chriſt, denied a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, and attempted at leaſt to extinguiſh even the belief of a God. I cannot but intreat them to mingle prudence with zeal, to conſider the ſigns of the times and the ſeaſons, and to beware leſt, by precipitate endeavours to diſſeminate their own favorite tenets, they facilitate the introduction of thoſe licentious and profane opinions, which are alike injurious to Chriſtianity and ſociety." Here is a harſh reflection on thoſe who preach redemption, purchaſed wholly by the merits of Jeſus Chriſt.

If the religious or political tenets of the Methodiſts, or of any other ſect or party, of whatever denomination, be ſuch as tends to lead men to crimes ſimilar to thoſe which ſince the year 1789 have been committed in France, I wiſh I could uſe with fervency

fervency a ſhort prayer of the church of England, which is, "Good Lord deliver me" from ever adopting ſuch.

It would take up too much of my time and paper fully to anſwer Mr. CLAPHAM's ſermon, I ſhall, therefore, touch only on ſome particular paſſages of it. In page 9, he ſays, "We will diveſt ourſelves of every prejudice. We will conſider fairly and impartially how far their tenets promote the intereſts of Chriſtianity—how far they conduce to the real welfare of ſociety." This declaration of the preacher's made me read his ſermon with much attention, and impreſſed me with a doubt whether he, when he wrote it, perfectly knew "what ſpirit he was of," or whether he was well acquainted with the deceitfulneſs of the human heart. For where is the man who, at all times, can wholly diveſt himſelf of prejudice, and poſſeſs himſelf of impartiality? "There is not a juſt man upon earth that doeth good and ſinneth not."

If the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM has, as he ſays, diveſted himſelf of prejudice, how comes it to paſs that he has with ſo much vehemence expoſed, and even it appears too evidently exaggerated, the faults of the Methodiſts and their miniſters? According to his account, themſelves, and their doctrines too, are altogether bad. Is this diveſting himſelf of prejudice? In page 21, he ſays, "The regulation of the moral temper, and the extinction of the malignant paſſions, do not, alas, ſeem to be eſſential,

eſſential, or even ſubordinate, parts of their ſyſtem." And in page 24, he ſays, "We find between Popery and Methodiſm a very near affinity*." He, however, acknowledges that they have done ſome good in manufacturing towns, by reclaiming ſome from their evil courſes.

After this Mr. CLAPHAM goes on with a relation of the ſchemes, practiſed by the Methodiſts, for the increaſe of their followers; and of the methods they take to ingratiate themſelves into the favour of their "caſual hearers;" and after mentioning ſeveral, he ſays, "There is another means of increaſing their followers, which I cannot reprobate with ſufficient indignation—the unjuſt reflections, and ſcandalous miſrepreſentations, very induſtriouſly made of our tenets, and of our preaching. Becauſe we inculcate upon our hearers the neceſſity of a good life, we are accuſed of preaching ſalvation by works, independent of the covenanted mercy of God through Chriſt his ſon. On the contrary, redemption, we invariably teſtify, is purchaſed to the whole human race by the ſacrifice and death of Chriſt; but we further contend, that unleſs we fulfil the conditions of it, we ſhall not be entitled to it's bleſſings."

I would aſk Mr. CLAPHAM, if the latter part of this paragraph is agreeable to the tenor of the ar-

* Between the religious tenets exhibited by the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM, and thoſe of the Arminians, there appears to be no difference.

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ticles of the church of England. It evidently appears to me, it is quite contradictory. I would adviſe him to read attentively the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th articles. He will, however, probably anſwer, that they require to be reviſed and corrected, (or rather explained to the vulgar) and if he does, we ſhall in that reſpect perfectly agree; for I think the reviſion, as far as article 15, made by the Aſſembly of Divines in the year 1643, though not adopted by the church, more plain and eaſy to be underſtood than the articles as they now ſtand.

Before I make known my ſentiments on ſuch an important ſubject, I wiſh to premiſe, that it is not my intention to endeavour, in the ſmalleſt degree, to juſtify, or take the part of the Methodiſts, or of any other ſect, in any thing contrary to the ſcriptures and ſound reaſon; for it is to be feared, that there are bad miniſters and bad people among all ſects and denominations profeſſing Chriſtianity. Nor is it my deſign to throw any ill-natured reflection on the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM, or on thoſe of his way of thinking; for I conſider every man has a right to think and act in matters of religion, which relate to the concerns of his ſoul only, as he judges to be moſt acceptable to Him, who commands every one that names the name of Chriſt to depart from iniquity—but my drift is, to juſtify and approve truth, and to condemn and diſcard error.

My belief of the grand ſcheme of the ſalvation of mankind, planned by Almighty God, and begun, executed,

executed, and finiſhed by Chriſt Jeſus his Son, which I mean to exhibit in oppoſition to that of the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM'S, has not been obtained by any immediate revelation or inſpiration, but from reading the bible and other religious books, and from hearing miniſters of the church of Scotland, of England, of the Seceders, of the Methodiſts, &c. preach ſuch doctrines as I, from ſome cauſe or other, verily believe to be the only way of ſalvation, whereby any of the progeny of Adam can be ſaved from eternal perdition.

From the laſt cited paſſage, it may be juſtly inferred, Mr. CLAPHAM'S opinion is, that God has entered into covenant with all mankind, and that there are certain conditions ſtipulated, which if any individual perform, he ſhall be entitled to the heavenly inheritance. But, on the contrary, if any individual fall ſhort in the performance of thoſe conditions, he muſt inevitably periſh. This certainly is neither more nor leſs than a covenant of works: for let us for a moment ſuppoſe that ſuch a ſcheme of ſalvation were admitted true, what would become of thoſe who do not ſin "after the ſimilitude* of Adam's tranſgreſſion," that is, infants, who are guilty of original ſin, but who die before they can commit actual tranſgreſſion, and conſequently are incapable of performing any condition whatever.

* Rom. v.

God

God created man in his own likeneſs, after his own image, in knowledge, righteouſneſs, and holineſs. Adam, the firſt man, was appointed the repreſentative of all thoſe that were to ſpring from him; he was endowed with full ſtrength, power, and will to fulfil all the laws and commandments which God, his maker, ſhould at any time pleaſe to impoſe upon, or order him to perform. Being thus endowed, God was pleaſed to enter into covenant with him; the conditions of which were, that if Adam would obey the commandments and will of God perfectly, he and his poſterity ſhould be entitled to eternal life: but on the other hand, if he tranſgreſſed, or broke the commandments, himſelf and his poſterity ſhould die temporally and ſpiritually, and be eternally puniſhed. When this covenant was entered into, God commanded man not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree; but notwithſtanding this, man became diſobedient unto the will of his Maker, and took and eat of the fruit of the tree, of which God had ſaid, In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die: on this account man became liable to temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal death. Accordingly, that very day, nay even that very inſtant in which he did eat of the forbidden fruit, he died ſpiritually; and had the whole puniſhment ſtipulated been inflicted in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, on all mankind, no injuſtice could have been with juſtice imputed to God. No ſooner, however, had man tranſgreſſed, than the

Almighty, out of his own free good will and pleaſure, promiſed that he would, in due time, raiſe up from among the race of mankind, one that ſhould fulfil the whole law, ſatisfy divine offended juſtice, and thereby raiſe up from among human fallen man a progeny as holy, righteous, and juſt, as man was in his primitive ſtate.

Thus on account of the diſtinguiſhing mercy of God, and the promiſe made by him unto Adam, man was ſpared; and although the Saviour, the eternal Son of God, did not immediately come into the world to take the ſinleſs nature of man upon him; yet it is evident that from the fall of the firſt Adam, to the coming of the ſecond * Adam, many were renewed in the ſpirit of their minds, and made holy by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, ſent by Chriſt, the eternal Son and equal of the Moſt High God, who had covenanted with his Father to perform in man's ſtead the whole moral law, which before the fall was legibly written by the finger of God in Adam's heart, and afterwards on tables of ſtone delivered to the children of Iſrael, and handed down from them to us. And not only did Chriſt, the Son of the living God, covenant to fulfil the broken law, but alſo to ſatisfy offended Divine Juſtice for the ſins and

* "The firſt man Adam was made a living ſoul; the laſt Adam was made a quickening ſpirit. The firſt man is of the earth earthy; the ſecond is the Lord from heaven." 1 Cor. xv.

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tranſgreſſions of all thoſe of the children of men who ſhould in any nation, or period of the world, ſubmit to be ſaved wholly in his way, by the merits of his life, ſufferings, death, and reſurrection.

It appears to me that the whole ſcope of the Bible, from the beginning of Geneſis to the end of Revelations, tends to illuſtrate and ſet forth the ſpiritual death of mankind, and conſequently their entire inability to raiſe themſelves from that ſtate. Since the fall of man, no mere man has been able in thought, word, or deed, to keep perfectly the leaſt (if any one of them may be termed little) command of God. I could quote a variety of ſcripture texts for the illuſtration and confirmation of what I aſſert; but it ſeems Mr. CLAPHAM can eaſily explain them in ſuch a way as to make them ſubſervient to ſupport his own tenets, right or wrong. I ſhall not, therefore, be profuſe with them. Nevertheleſs it is neceſſary to prove, that after man fell, God could never, conſiſtent with juſtice, enter into a covenant with ſinful man; not only ſinful and depraved, but to all intents and purpoſes, or in every ſenſe of the word, ſpiritually dead to every thing good or acceptable in the ſight of that great tremendous Being, who cannot behold ſin but with the greateſt abhorrence and deteſtation, becauſe it is diametrically oppoſite to his nature and eſſence.

Before God could have entered into covenant a ſecond time with mankind, he muſt of neceſſity have placed them in their primitive ſtate. Indeed

as well might God at once have pardoned Adam and all his poſterity, without any ſatisfaction to offended juſtice, which would not have been agreeable to one of his attributes, as to have covenanted with him whom he knew was poſſeſſed of no power to fulfil any condition whatever of a covenant perfectly.

We have ſeen the Britiſh government refuſing to treat with the people of a neighbouring nation, becauſe it is apprehended they are ſo deſperately wicked, and unſtable, that there ſeems little or no probability of their being either willing or able to perform any one article of a treaty, be the conditions ever ſo favourable*. This being the caſe among men, who are in every reſpect on a footing of

* When one powerful nation thinks that its people, actions, and conduct, are ſo generous, juſt, and righteous, and the people, actions, and conduct of a neighbouring nation, as powerful as itſelf, ſo wicked, unjuſt, and abandoned, that it is better and more righteous to continue at war, than to treat with it, it I conceive may be conſidered as the omen of a moſt dreadful cataſtrophe.

Dr. Young, a ſeceding miniſter in Scotland, in a pamphlet publiſhed laſt year, ſays, "When the conduct and complexion of the rulers of France are conſidered, rather than Great Britain ſhould enter into any treaty or alliance with them, every true friend of order, of juſtice, of religion, or of his country, would wiſh to have war with them, as Iſrael had with Amalek, from one generation to another." Such a declaration, from a miniſter of the goſpel, is an awful ſpecimen of the depravity of human nature. Does the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt teach men to deſtroy one

of equality, in regard to their priſtine ſtate, can it be reaſonably ſuppoſed that God, who knows every thought of the human heart, would enter into a treaty or covenant with inferior beings, entirely incapable of thinking a good thought, or of performing one action pleaſing or acceptable in the ſight of Him, who fills heaven and earth with his omniſcient preſence?

By many it is thought, mankind are not naturally in ſuch a deplorable ſtate as I have repreſented them to be. They imagine, that God at firſt made man poſſeſſed of, or endowed with, the ſame mental faculties as by experience we find him

one another? No. It ſays "Put up thy ſword into its ſcabbard."—It ſays, "If thy enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirſty, give him water to drink." By this, however, it is not meant that a nation is not to take up arms to defend itſelf from the ravages of an enemy. Nevertheleſs, it would perhaps have been more becoming of the ſeceding miniſter to have recommended a continual warfare with

"The purchaſer of night and woe,
The forfeiter of day;
The debt that every man did owe,
But only God could pay."

Man, though an enemy, may be made a friend by treaty; but no treaty is to be entered into with ſin or the devil. The French are men of like paſſions with ourſelves; they may, therefore, be treated with, and not railed againſt, for "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he diſputed about the body of Moſes, durſt not bring againſt him a railing accuſation, but ſaid, The Lord rebuke thee."

the inheritor of. They cannot perceive how it can be conſiſtent with the mercy and goodneſs of God, to puniſh man eternally for violating thoſe laws of his, which their nature prompts to. Such imaginations and ideas are derogatory to the attributes of the Almighty, who at firſt made all things perfect and good: nor could it in the very nature of things, be otherwiſe; for every living thing that generates or brings forth, has a tendency to generate its own likeneſs. Can it, therefore, without impiety, be imagined, that He who is an holy immaculate Being, could have made man, and at the ſame time endowed him with a nature or mental faculties ſuch as we find him now inherit, altogether ſinful, depraved, and impure? Man naturally bears the very image and picture of the devil, and the devil is verily the author, generator, and father of ſin.

It appears to me, that the writers of the bible had revealed to them things which were not neceſſary to be handed down to us, in ſuch a perſpicuous way as we could have wiſhed; I mean, that concerning the diſobedience of the fallen angels. It is clear, from many paſſages in ſcripture, that a number of angels became high-minded, rebelled, and ſinned againſt God. "God ſpared not the angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkneſs, to be reſerved unto judgment." PETER. Theſe fallen angels are repreſented as having a head, or ruler, who

who is called the devil; and whatever was the place or dignity of this evil ſpirit before his fall, or whatever might be the crime for which he was caſt down from heaven, it is certain he has very great power and authority over the minds of men. It was him that inſtigated man to ſin againſt God; it is him that tempts men to every evil work: indeed, he is in full poſſeſſion of all the powers of the ſoul of every unregenerated perſon. Adam, the firſt man, having complied with the inſinuations and ſuggeſtions of the devil, the likeneſs and image of God was obliterated, and the likeneſs and image of the devil imprinted and engraven on every faculty of his ſoul. "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a ſon in his own likeneſs, after his own image, and called his name Seth." Seth was begotten not in the image of God, in which Adam had been created; but in the image of fallen Adam: he was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did his mother conceive him—a child of diſobedience,—by nature a child of wrath, even as others*; the profane deſcendants of Cain not excepted.

Admitting theſe things true; and who can deny them, that believes the bible? it was abſolutely neceſſary for the redemption of mankind, that God ſhould raiſe up a man according to his own heart,

* Believing, regenerated parents, produce children according to their nature; not according to the grace which God for Chriſt's ſake has given them.

able and willing to fulfil the whole law—ſatisfy offended juſtice—and to raiſe up from the ſpiritual grave of ſin, a race holy, harmleſs, and undefiled, like unto himſelf.

The conditions of the covenant of grace, or of the goſpel, therefore, are nothing leſs, but vaſtly greater, than the conditions of the covenant of works. The man Chriſt Jeſus not only fulfilled the conditons of the covenant of works in man's ſtead, but alſo paid the debts of all thoſe of mankind whom he has, does, or means to regenerate by the efficacy or workings of his holy ſpirit in their ſouls.

Chriſt, the Son of the living God, was the greateſt moraliſt that ever lived upon the earth. When ſojourning upon this earth, if any one aſked him what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life, his reply was, Keep the commandments. His reaſon for thus anſwering was, I apprehend, to make the law a ſchoolmaſter, to drive them to depend wholly upon Chriſt: for by trying to keep the law, to merit life, men are brought to ſee and feel that they cannot ſatisfy its demands, which are exceedingly broad: they are therefore humbled, and led to ſubmit to be ſaved wholly by the righteouſneſs of God the Saviour.

Thoſe that think they can merit heaven by performing conditions, are, I conceive, greatly miſtaken; the promiſes of the goſpel are all made to men as being conſidered in, and united to, Chriſt their head;

head; "Now to Abraham and his ſeed were the promiſes made. He ſaith not, And to ſeeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy ſeed, which is Chriſt." PAUL.

Mr. CLAPHAM, however, inſinuates, that this doctrine leads to immorality. Did it lead the apoſtles and prophets to immorality? No: ſays PAUL, "Shall we continue in ſin that grace may abound? God forbid.

The three laſt pages of Mr. CLAPHAM's ſermon do him credit. If he take his own advice therein given, and read the ſcriptures ſeriouſly, eſpecially PAUL's epiſtles, I think he will ſoon turn Methodiſt himſelf; that is, preach a finiſhed ſalvation by Chriſt to all humbled ſinners, of whatever ſect or denomination *. On this ſubject let the opinions of others be what they may, mine is as follows:—If I am not ſaved entirely by free grace, independent of any merit of mine, I ſhall be eternally undone; and whether I am to be ſaved, or whether I am not to be ſaved, it is my indiſpenſable duty to endeavour to keep the commandments of God in thought, word, and deed, and to be obedient to the commandments and laws of men in authority, unleſs they evidently appear to be contrary to the laws of God.

* If thoſe are Methodiſts who preach ſalvation without conditions, I am glad there are ſeveral of that deſcription in the church of England. Good works are evidences of ſalvation, and not conditions to obtain it.

That the Diſſenters are reckoned not friendly to the conſtitution, is evinced by the teſt act being ſtill kept in force. Real chriſtians, however, will not, ſo long as they are tolerated, be over ſolicitous about its repeal. An evil ſpringing from it ſeems to be, that a man cannot hold a place in the adminiſtration * unleſs he has taken the ſacrament according to the ceremonies of the church of England; it may, therefore, be the means of leading men into ſin: for the Lord's ſupper was inſtituted to commemorate Chriſt's death and ſufferings, and not to be a teſt of qualification for holding places of emolument and power. It is undoubtedly hurtful to any government, to prevent men of abilities and true religion from having any ſhare in it. Joſeph was advanced in Egypt to a high poſt in government; and ſo was Daniel, &c.; none of whom could by any means ſubſcribe to the eſtabliſhed mode of religion of the

* The church of Scotland is as legally eſtabliſhed by the conſtitution and laws of Britain, as the Engliſh church is. Is it not therefore a moſt glaring abſurdity that a member of the eſtabliſhed church of Scotland cannot hold a place under government in England, unleſs he can give proof of his having conformed to the ceremonies of the Engliſh church.

I believe the church government and form of worſhip, eſtabliſhed by authority in Scotland, is more ſimple and more agreeable to that of the apoſtles, than that of England, or of any other I am acquainted with.

countries

countries of which they were ſubjects, and political members of government †.

We are lately informed, that in China there is properly no eſtabliſhed religion; none to which any monopoly of particular privileges is attached; none that excludes the profeſſors of another from office and command. The employments of ſtate are open to all ſubjects, whether they pray in a miao or a pagoda. The project of an alliance between church and ſtate, does not ſeem to have entered into the heads of the politicians of China. Perhaps the pride of deſpotiſm diſdained the ſupport of religion; or the wiſdom of government rendered the aid of ſuperſtition unneceſſary. The Europeans who firſt viſited the country, were aſtoniſhed to find a general toleration of worſhip and opinions prevail, and to obſerve Lauras, Bouges, Perſees, Jews, and Mahometans, living together in peace, and believing as they pleaſed—a ſtate of ſociety as yet uncommon in Europe!

Preſumption and vanity have not been engaged more ſucceſsfuly in obſtructing the progreſs of general knowledge, than the paſſions, the imagination, and intereſt have been employed in darkening the mind with prejudices reſpecting ſociety, buſineſs,

† In all the hiſtory which the bible contains concerning nations, and their governments, I can find no one inſtance of a good man trying to pull down kings or governments, or endeavouring to breed anarchy and confuſion—though frequently falſely accuſed of ſeditious deſigns.

arts,

arts, and intercourſe. National partialities are ſo invincible, even in moſt enlightened and civilized periods, that it ſeems impoſſible for the people in general of any nation, to do juſtice in the judgments they form of the capacity, the ingenuity, the courage, or the integrity of their rivals.

The proud Jews of old treated all the reſt of mankind with diſdain and contempt; and though it may be ſuppoſed they admitted them to be creatures made by God, yet they accounted them unworthy of his care; they monopolized his attention and his providence.

Proud of their enterprize, their learning, and their arts, the Greeks conſidered all other nations, even the refined and luxurious Perſians, as barbarous; and held in little eſtimation their valour, their ſagacity, and their honour.

The Athenians repreſented their rivals the Spartans, ignorant, unpoliſhed, ambitious, and as deſtitute of every valuable quality, except perſeverance and ſtratagem. The Spartans retaliated the opprobrious epithets of factious, fickle, impertinent, ſophiſtical; of reſtleſs, loquacious, turbulent, and oſtentatious.

The Romans, like the Greeks, ſtigmatized with the appellation of barbarous, the reſt of the world. They vilified the military character of the Carthaginians and Macedonians; they ridiculed the mercantile ſpirit of the former, and converted their national

national character into a proverb of reproach, and ſcarcely left them a ſingle civil virtue.

And although ſuperior liberty of ſentiment prevails in modern times, and nations having much more intercourſe, ſurvey their neighbours with rather leſs averſion and diſlike; yet there is ſcarcely to be found, even among learned men, that candor and generoſity, which, diſdaining local and partial attachments, conſtitute the character of the chriſtian, the philoſopher, the unbiaſſed citizen of the world.

Among their countrymen, even all civilized nations diſcover knowledge, genius, veracity, generoſity, and induſtry, ſuperior to what are to be found in ſimilar circumſtances among their neighbours. The Engliſh, the French, the Germans, the Italians, will not, I believe, yield precedency in ſciences of art.

The predominancy of imagination, of paſſion, and of attachment in private life, extinguiſhes at leaſt in a great degree, almoſt every ray of impartiality. So prevalent in ſome minds is the power of imagination, as to render them impatient under the irkſome operation of comparing ideas; and they haſten to every deciſion, however erroneous, rather than continue in ſuſpence. Often do vain men give themſelves airs of faſhionable profligacy, which in their hearts they do not approve of. They deſire to be praiſed for what they themſelves do not think praiſe-worthy, and are aſhamed of unfaſhionable

able virtues, which they ſometimes practiſe in ſecret, and which they have ſecretly ſome degree of veneration for.

There are hypocrites of wealth and greatneſs, as well as of religion and virtue; and proud men are as apt to pretend to be what they are not, in the one way, as cunning men are in the other. They aſſume the equipage, and ſplendid way of living, of their ſuperiors, without conſidering whatever may be praiſe-worthy in any of theſe, derives its whole merit and propriety from its ſuitableneſs to that ſituation and fortune which both require, and can eaſily ſupport, the expence. Many poor men place their glory in being thought rich, without conſidering that the glory of riches and ſplendor gives no laſting contentment; or that living above his ſtation and income muſt in the end reduce him to beggary, and render his ſituation ſtill more unlike that of thoſe whom he admires and imitates, than it had been at firſt.

To arrive at the attainment of this envied ſituation, the candidates for riches too frequently forſake the paths of virtue; for unfortunately the road which leads to the one, and that which leads to the other, generally lie in very oppoſite directions. But ambitious men flatter themſelves, that in the ſplendid ſituation to which they advance, they will have ſo many means of commanding the reſpect and admiration of mankind, and will be enabled to act with ſuperior propriety and grace, and that the luſtre of

their conduct and fortune will entirely efface or cover the foulneſs of their ſteps, by which they arrived at that elevation.

In ſeveral nations, the candidates for the higheſt ſtations are above law; and if they can acquire the object of their ambition, they have little or no fear of being called to account for the means by which they attained it; they therefore often endeavour not only by falſehood and fraud, the ordinary and vulgar arts of intrigue, but even ſometimes by the perpetration of moſt enormous crimes, by rebellion, by civil war, and by murder, to ſupplant and deſtroy thoſe who ſtand in the way of their greatneſs. More frequently, however, do they miſcarry than ſucceed; and very often gain nothing but the diſgraceful puniſhment which is due to their crimes. Should they, however, be fortunate enough to attain that wiſhed for greatneſs, they are always miſerably diſappointed in the happineſs which they expect to enjoy in it.

It is not altogether pleaſure or eaſe, but alſo honour of one kind or other, though often an honour very ill underſtood, that ambitious men purſue: but the honour of their exalted ſtation appears in their own eyes, and in the eyes of all other people, defiled and polluted by the baſeneſs of the means through which they roſe to it. Though by the profuſion of every liberal expence; though by the exceſſive indulgence of every profligate pleaſure, the wretched reſource too uſual of ruined characters; though

though by the hurry of public buſineſs, by the plunder and dazzling tumult of war, they may endeavour to blot out, both from their own memory, and that of other people, the remembrance of what they have done; that remembrance never fails to purſue them. They invoke, in vain, the diſmal and dark powers of forgetfulneſs and oblivion: they remember themſelves what they have done, and that remembrance tells them that other people muſt remember it. Amidſt all the gaudy pomp of the moſt oſtentatious greatneſs; amidſt all the venal and vile adulation of the great and of the learned; amidſt the more innocent though more fooliſh acclamations of the common people; amidſt all the pride of conqueſt, and the triumph of ſucceſsful war, they are ſtill ſecretly purſued by the avenging furies of ſhame and remorſe: and while glory ſeems to ſurround them on all ſides, they themſelves on all ſides ſee black and foul infamy faſt purſuing them, and every moment ready to overtake them.

The greater part of mankind are guided more by imagination and feeling, than by reaſon. The ſimilar relation one thing bears to another, influences them more than ſound argument. They will go with the multitude, however miſguided, rather than ſtand ſingle on the ſide of juſtice and truth.

It is evident that the paſſions pervert judgment ſtill more than the imagination; and there is ſcarcely any thing we wiſh to think right and reaſonable, which we do not find grounds for judging to be ſo. The

ſpirit

ſpirit of party, and the paſſions it excites, appear to eradicate every idea of equity and candour. Men oppoſe to day, what they ſupported yeſterday. They reprobate meaſures as void of honour, faith, and integrity, which they formerly maintained to be the reſult of wiſdom and diſcernment, and the fountain of the moſt important good.

When our intereſt comes in competition with that of others, it is almoſt impoſſible to ſurvey the ſubject of diſpute with an impartial eye. In ſuch caſes, men of candor being conſcious of their own imperfection, renounce judgment, or elſe endeavour to contemplate views and ſituation in the light they would ſerve neutral perſons. It is exceedingly difficult to free the mind from thoſe cauſes of erroneous judgment: but every inquirer ſhould make the attempt; as he may be aſſured his reſearches will otherwiſe never be attended with ſucceſs or pleaſure.

There is a claſs of prejudice, including all thoſe errors in judgment into which men are ſeduced from their peculiar circumſtances—from the conſtitution of their minds or bodies—rank in life and education. Numberleſs are the varieties of the external figure of the human race, and perhaps no leſs various are the conſtitutions of their minds. For this reaſon unanimity is not to be looked for, even concerning buſineſs: far leſs then concerning ſpeculative tenets of difficult conception. If judgments are formed

formed by candid men, they will be different ſuitable to the different aſpects in which the objects appear to their reſpective apprehenſions; yet no inconvenience ariſes from theſe different judgments, either in affairs or ſpeculation, if men are animated by charity and proper reſpect for the opinions of their neighbours as well as for their own. They add variety to action and converſation, correſpondent to the difference which is found to be eſtabliſhed in the nature of the human ſpecies. They excite patience and toleration, which afford exerciſe for the moſt amiable ſocial virtues.

If any large ſociety, or nation, pretend to be unanimous about tenets, ſpeculative in their nature, and far beyond vulgar comprehenſion, thoſe of religion not excepted; almoſt the whole of their judgments from which ſuch unanimity ſprings, muſt be imperfect, if not erroneous. They muſt be the judgments of teachers, or leaders, adopted without examination. The greater part of their followers are not capable of forming opinions, on account of the weakneſs of their mental faculties—of the abſtract nature of the ſubjects: and their aſſent, formed on pretended judgment, is no better than the acquieſcence in the judgments of thoſe they revere, concerning ſubjects which they do not rightly underſtand.

Moreover, though ſyſtems of eſtabliſhed tenets, whether religious, political, or philoſophical, are no doubt

doubt ſources of erroneous judgments, and ſhould therefore be embraced with caution; yet in ſome caſes they are perhaps neceſſary: if not entirely harmleſs, at leaſt they are negatively good; and if they do not make men right, they often prevent their going farther wrong.

The body of the people are unqualified to judge concerning politics, and muſt be led by opinions which they account wiſer than their own. If they are not guided by wiſe and good men, intereſted and deſigning men will take the direction of them. If decency and ſobriety are not honoured with the ſuperintendence of their ſentiments, extravagance and violence will aſſume the management of them. Nobody can doubt the propriety of giving the preference to the former guides: nobody can heſitate that the peace and happineſs of ſociety require this preference to be maintained by every reaſonable expedient.

Could men be induced to inquire with candor, and to tolerate with patience and reſpect, the opinions of one another, I ſhould conſider a ſyſtem of tenets eſtabliſhed by authority as unkind to truth; this, however, I am afraid is a pitch of refinement not to be expected to take place among the degenerate race of mankind.

The hiſtory of Great Britain exhibits to us two ſtriking examples of education; one of them religious, and the other political. King CHARLES the Firſt loſt his crown, and his life too, by the arbi-

trary maxims of government he had received from his anceſtors. King JAMES the Second loſt his crown, by the popiſh education he had received in France. And although CHARLES the Firſt is commonly called a martyr for the doctrine and worſhip of the church of England, and is accounted by the vulgar to have ſacrificed his life in defending her againſt the bigotry and violence of ſectaries, whoſe hatred to her and him were inſatiable; yet it is well known that his attachment to that church was neither the firſt nor the chief cauſe of the diſcontent which generated and prolonged the civil wars. Religious fears and jealouſies were then employed, as they often have been, to rouſe, irritate, and alienate the people. But the incroachments on property contrary to law, and the levying money without conſent of parliament, alarmed all wiſe men, and excited that tremendous ſpirit of reſiſtance which ended in the lamentable fate of that monarch, and the overturning of the conſtitution—evils that exceeded in magnitude every wiſh or conception of the patriots who firſt expoſed the arbitrary meaſures of the crown. There is little reaſon to doubt that king CHARLES knew the conſtitution, and reprobated the levying ſhip money by his own authority; but he had been fatally educated in the principles which ſuggeſted that caſes of neceſſity, or the wants of princes, were ſuperior to the conſtitution of the laws; and that if the parliament refuſed what ſupplies he judged requiſite, the caſe of neceſſity took place,

place, and that he was at liberty to exert his ſovereign power to provide for the ſalvation of the ſtate.

The education of king JAMES the Second, and his attachment to popery, were the grand ſprings of the Revolution, and of the baniſhment of the family of STUART from the throne of their anceſtors. Nothing, it ſeems, but the bigotry of that prince, could have ſaved the liberties of this country from extinction. If he could have relinquiſhed his attachment to popery,—if he could have moderated or ſuſpended that attachment, he might have reigned without a parliament, and trampled on the laws and liberties of his ſubjects. By œconomy and good management, his finances were in order, and nearly equal to the yearly expenditure of government. The calamities of the late civil wars were freſh in the memories of all ranks, and they were reluctant to review them. The ſpirit which had enflamed the body of the people againſt his father, had now nearly ſpent its force; and there was nothing to prevent ſucceſs, but to allow their minds to cool, and to habituate them to the ſlavery that was preparing for them. However, the blind zeal of the king, and his intemperate attachment to the popiſh religion, for the happineſs of this land, haſtened every event to a criſis: they ſo completely diſguſted friends and enemies, that the people, with much unanimity, puſhed from the throne, without violence and convulſion, a king and family who would ſacrifice the

happineſs and peace of a realm, to an abſurd ſyſtem of ſuperſtition.

In all ages party ſpirit has been the moſt formidable enemy to ſound judgment, in buſineſs, in learning, and in politics. It would ſeem no man ever retained either diſcernment or candor to withſtand its ſeduction. It would be endleſs to enumerate the examples of the baneful influence of this ſpirit, with which hiſtory and experience ſo plentifully ſupply us. Violent and numerous are the contentions it has produced,—in ſcience, in religion, and in buſineſs. When engaged in party, we are apt to retain no rule of judgment, but the opinion of the people with whom we aſſociate; every thing they think, ſay, or do, is right—proceeds from honourable and uſeful motives—and is directed to the accompliſhment of ſome important end. Our friends are all men of diſcernment, of integrity, of generoſity, of impartial views, and of great virtues. The caſe of our antagoniſts, their motives, their qualities, and their conduct, are directly the reverſe—their deſigns are the reſult of imprudence, folly, or iniquity. Weakneſs, ſelfiſhneſs, or wickedneſs mark all their plans, and diſfigure all their operations. They inherit no ſpark of diſcretion, enterprize, or public ſpirit. Truth is thus loſt or miſrepreſented; and in all the ſubjects of conteſt, there will be found on neither ſide a ſingle ſound or important judgment.

Did not attachment to party blind the underſtanding, and obliterate the feelings of candor, men would be aſhamed of the contempt or neglect with which they receive the plaineſt truths. On ſome occaſions, this ſpirit appears to excite ſuch partiality, as not only to deſpiſe the dictates of truth and reaſon, but diſregard even the moſt important intereſts of ſociety, provided it accompliſhes its favourite objects of ambition.

To diſtinguiſh this age from former ages, it perhaps might not be improper to call it the trading age. Moſt politicians place the happineſs of a people in the flouriſhing ſtate of their commerce; conſequently it is not to be wondered at, if the public affairs are combined upon that principle—if treaties of peace degenerate into treaties of commerce; and if trade be the means of leading nations into wars. Kingdoms reciprocally endeavour to incroach upon advantages, either real or imaginary, enjoyed by their neighbours. Political writers inſtruct their fellow citizens in the knowledge of things, which are eſteemed the ſource of public felicity; and ſovereigns favour that which they think calculated to increaſe their power: all objects relative to commerce are now looked upon as the moſt intereſting. Senſible men, however, propoſe this queſtion:—How far is it conſiſtent with the intereſt of a ſtate to favour luxury and commerce?

It is neceſſity which cauſes a people to carry on an œconomical trade. The ancients ſcarcely knew

any trade but this one; and the nature of this traffic was, I apprehend, the chief cauſe of the contempt with which the Roman pride loaded trade in general. But if neceſſity rears this edifice, it cannot give it ſtability. The legiſlature has no great power over that which neceſſity creates, and neceſſity deſtroys. Œconomical trade was previous to, or the origin of the foreign trade, which, by introducing new commodities, and ridding a country of its ſuperfluities, affords ſubſiſtence to a greater number of inhabitants. A foreign trade, extended over the whole world, promiſes thoſe ſtates an advantage which ſeem particularly to ſtrike our modern politicians, and prejudice them in favour of trade in general. With ſome reaſon men are ſilently agreed to make riches conſiſt in the poſſeſſion of gold and ſilver: theſe may properly be called ſigns; and if people do not poſſeſs within their own territories mines from whence the materials of theſe ſigns are drawn, the only way they have to procure them is to force them from their neighbours by an extenſive commerce. The poſſeſſion of theſe ſigns, which are called money, is become abſolutely neceſſary.

National intereſts, perpetually confuſed by the number of fruitleſs treaties, no longer admit of any deciſion but that of arms. Theſe almoſt inceſſant wars are made either upon the frontiers, or in foreign countries: when the troops muſt march, money in hand, they even frequently become deſtructive of money

money by the manner in which they are carried on. The contagious cuſtom of keeping, in time of peace, as well as in war, a diſproportioned number of idle troops; the immenſe quantities of all ſorts of ſtores and ammunition; the coſtly perfection of a navy; the rage of beſieging; the multiplication of fortified places; all theſe objects require an enormous ſum. Potentates not content with laviſhing their money for their own armaments, or with fighting with their own forces, now embark their neighbours in quarrels foreign to them: allies are bought, ſubſidies are paid. To be ſhort; if the maxim that money is the ſinew of war, was ever verified, it is now: trade, which alone furniſhes that ſinew, is deemed the ſtrength and ſecurity of nations.

The exportation of the fruits of induſtry of a country, brings to that country in return the products of another, or money, with which thoſe products are purchaſed. In proportion to the extent and cultivation of its lands, a trading country has, therefore, the more means of ſubſiſting a greater number of inhabitants. Such facility of ſubſiſtence increaſes population. Theſe are ſome of the uſeful and advantageous effects aſcribed to trade: but are theſe of ſufficient utility to induce nations to uſurp the rights of humanity, by monopolizing trade? or does it not carry with it its own puniſhment, by becoming the ſpring of the deſtruction of an unjuſt people? So long as the commerce of a nation does not exceed the bounds, which it would

ſeem nature has preſcribed; it may be the means of rendering a people happy by its advantageous conſequences: but when it goes beyond thoſe bounds, it makes a nation feel new wants, and excites her to gratify them. Men ſeek for ſuperfluities, when they grow tired of real conveniencies. Fancy irritated will no longer be bridled, but run rapidly after refinements: and the number of makers of ſuperfluities furniſh the means of gratifying this irregular deſire. Not to ſtop till they meet with ſome invincible obſtacle, is the nature of the paſſions, and of curioſity. This impulſe once given to the imaginations of the people, hurries a nation into luxury; and the effects of luxury and riches are cloſely connected. In ſpeaking of the viciſſitudes of human knowledge, in regard to the conſtitution of ſtates, Lord Bacon obſerves, That men apply themſelves to the ſciences and fine arts, in the flower of their life; and to the mechanic arts and trade, when their faculties begin to decline. This order ſeems to be founded in reality; for nations, as well as men, are liable to a ſecond childhood. If a moderate trade preſerves a people in the vigour of manhood; too great a trade haſtens it to old age. Ambition, ſtimulated by the fortunes made in trade, ſeizes the minds of vaſt numbers. Intereſt, the huge idol of a trading nation, tends to baniſh virtue, and increaſe vice. The thirſt for gold predominates over the deſire for real glory and happineſs. If the ſpirit of trade wholly

wholly engroſs the maſs of a nation, enlightened knowledge and virtue will ſuffer a depreſſion.

In the hiſtory of the world, do we find a ſingle inſtance of a rich people, plunged in luxury, or wholly intent upon trade, that ever diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their knowledge, or their actions. Let an unbiaſſed reader run over the preſent ſtate of Europe; let him look for the native countries of the great men; let him diſcover the abode of knowledge; and let him judge from facts, whether the ſpirit of trade, and its extenſion, leads to the ſciences, to talents, and to virtue. In a ſingle nation there may, perhaps, be ſome exception to this rule; but that ſingle nation owes this advantage, under Providence, to the ſingularity of its conſtitution, which mitigates hitherto the bad effects of a vaſt commerce, which, it is too much to be feared, will not mitigate them long. The increaſe of population, which is looked upon as a conſequence of every ſort of trade, is in fact a benefit which ariſes only from a moderate commerce. It appears, too extenſive a one is deſtructive of the human ſpecies. Not to know that the only ſolid foundation of a numerous population is agriculture, one muſt be little acquainted with the principles of ſound policy. Without agriculture the ſubſiſtence of a people is precarious, and muſt more immediately depend on the uncertain viciſſitude of harveſts, or the arbitrary aſſiſtance of neighbours. Uncertainty of ſubſiſtence hinders

people

people from marrying; and even induces them to leave their native country. The claſs of huſbandmen who exerciſe the ſureſt traffic, and whoſe children are much of their riches, is of all others the fitteſt and moſt inclined to multiply. Very great commerce depopulates the country, diminiſhes agriculture, and leſſens by degrees the claſs of huſbandmen. The avidity and indolence of men, tempt them to quit a laborious occupation, for one which is more lucrative and more tranquil, though leſs certain. The eaſe in which the artificers of luxury live, ſeduces the more innocent peaſant, draws him to the principal cities, and the country becomes by degrees deſerted.

Other cauſes of deſtruction to the human ſpecies, are produced by too extenſive a commerce. It renders long voyages neceſſary, frequently to climates which do not agree with the conſtitution of the ſailor, and which deſtroy numbers of thoſe who undertake them. It occaſions the ſettling of colonies in diſtant countries, where the coloniſed often periſh: colonies which exhauſt their mother country in every ſhape, without being of any other uſe than furniſhing her with ſuperfluities, which ſhe could do without.

Money, or the ſigns of riches, accumulated by commerce, enable a nation to make war in the territories of their neighbours; and it may impower it to approve of the ruinous policy of buying inconſtant friendſhip, and loſing money by paying ſubſidies.

dies. How much, however, were it to be wiſhed, for the happineſs of ſovereigns and their ſubjects, that trade ſhould not contribute to the fatal facility of multiplying and perpetuating uſeleſs and deſtructive wars. Founded partly in ſpecious prejudices, the political ſyſtem of Europe, which ſerves to gloſs over ill-judged ambition, makes its ſovereigns interfere in all quarrels, under the pretence of maintaining the balance of power. For equivocal intereſts of a branch of commerce, which ought to be rather given up to nations blind enough to ſeek their own ruin, the ſword is drawn, and after much bloodſhed and great expence, the intereſts of the belligerent parties are as little ſettled as before;—a forced peace is made, and laſts becauſe all ſides are weary, till another war begins.

Did not freſh ſupplies of money, or the ſigns of riches, furniſh freſh food to this miſguided ambition, mankind might hope for a little repoſe. The maſters of the world would be forced to practiſe the maxims of a beneficent policy, by which they would find that the power of a nation conſiſts in the number, induſtry, and morality of its ſubjects; and that the productions of the ſoil are the only real riches;—that there are no ſolid conqueſts but thoſe that are gained over nature and art in one's own country.

The abundance of riches increaſes the deſtructive manner in which wars are carried on. One would almoſt be inclined to think, that nations ſtaked

ſtaked their revenues at the game of chance, to play at once for the whole value of their ſtates. The dangerous credit of a rich people, facilitates to them the means of borrowing more than they can pay. The debts of the moſt powerful nations, are ſo diſproportioned to the reality of their funds, that they will at laſt be reduced to the neceſſity either of clearing themſelves by violent means, or be forced to ſink beneath the heavy load.

Poor nations, like poor people, have not credit enough to ruin themſelves by borrowing; conſequently they will acquire ſtrength inſenſibly, whilſt the rich will fall into a lingering conſumption. A greater difficulty to contract public debts, would perhaps bring about times when the ſacrifice of a ſmall number, or of none, might decide all quarrels.

The increaſe of the ſigns of riches, or money, and the great national debts, that is, the wealth of individuals, and the poverty of the public, are two chief cauſes of the high price of proviſions. No one, who is in the leaſt acquainted with this country, can entertain a doubt that our riches are in fact amazingly increaſed within a few years. Whoever will view our public works,—our roads, our bridges, our pavements, and our hoſpitals—the prodigious extenſion of London, and, in ſome proportion, that of every conſiderable town in Great Britain—whoever chuſes to view the poſſeſ-

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ſions of individuals, their houſes, furniture, and equipages; tables, parks, gardens, clothes, plate, and jewels; will find around him every where ſufficient ſigns to teſtify to the truth of this propoſition. This great increaſe of private opulence is undoubtedly occaſioned in a great meaſure by the many wars we have been involved in.

Surely it will be unneceſſary for me to enter into an enumeration of the cauſes of the late immenſe increaſe of the national debt. Thoſe who remember the many millions borrowed annually, funded and expended during the American war, can be under no difficulty to account for its increaſe. For the payment of the intereſt of theſe new funds, new taxes were every year impoſed, and additional burdens laid on every comfort, and almoſt on every neceſſary of life. Theſe muſt unavoidably increaſe the prices of all the neceſſaries of life, and that in a much greater proportion than is uſually underſtood: for a tax laid on any commodity, does not only add the value to the price of that commodity, but the dealer in it muſt advance the price conſiderably more than the tax, for he muſt not only repay himſelf the original tax, but muſt have compenſation for his loſſes in trade by bad debts, and loſs of intereſt by his own increaſed capital; and beſides this, every new tax does not only affect the price of the commodity on which it is laid, but that of all others, whether

whether taxed or not, and with which at firſt ſight it ſeems to have no manner of connexion. Thus, for inſtance, a tax on candles muſt raiſe the price of a coat, &c. becauſe out of theſe all the taxes of the candles of the woolcomber, the weaver, and the taylor, muſt be paid. A tax on malt or ale muſt raiſe the price of ſhoes, becauſe from them all the taxes upon the malt bought, and ale drank, by the tanner, leather-dreſſer, and ſhoe-maker, which is not a little, muſt be refunded.

Upon corn no tax is immediately laid; but the price of it muſt neceſſarily be advanced, becauſe out of the price of corn all the taxes paid by the farmer on ſalt, leather, hops, malt, ſoap, and many others, muſt be repaid; ſo that corn is as effectually taxed, as if a duty by the buſhel had been primarily laid upon it. For taxes, like the various ſtreams which form a general inundation, by whatever channels they ſeparately find admiſſion, unite at laſt, and overflow the whole. Wherefore the man who ſold ſand upon an aſs, during a former war, and raiſed the price of it, though abuſed for an impoſition, acted undoubtedly upon right reaſons; for although there were no new taxes then laid on either ſand or aſſes, yet he found by experience, that from the taxes impoſed on almoſt all other things, he could neither maintain himſelf, his aſs, or his wife, ſo cheap as formerly; on this account he was under the neceſſity of advancing the price of his ſand, out of which alone all the taxes he paid

paid muſt be refunded. Is it not therefore clear and evident, beyond all contradiction, that the increaſe of taxes muſt neceſſarily increaſe the price of every article, whether taxed or untaxed.

Every million of funded debt is in fact a new creation of ſo much wealth to individuals, both of principal and intereſt: for the principal, being eaſily transferrable, operates exactly as ſo much money; and the intereſt by enabling ſo many to conſume the commodities on which taxes are impoſed: for the payment of it in a great meaſure produces annually an income to diſcharge itſelf.

Of all the enormous ſums expended, no great deal beſides the ſubſidies granted to German princes, is loſt to the individuals of this country: though the whole is irrecoverably alienated from the public, all the reſt annually returns into the pockets of the merchants, contractors, brokers, ſtock-jobbers, and enables them to lend it again to the public on a new mortgage the following year. Every emiſſion of paper credit by bank notes, navy, and exchequer bills, ſo long as they circulate, anſwers all the additional purpoſes of ſo much gold and ſilver as their value amounts to.

If to theſe we add the immenſe riches daily flowing in from our commerce extended over every quarter of the globe, and the amazing ſums imported from the Eaſt Indies, ſurely it will not be difficult to account for the opulence of the preſent times, which has enabled men to increaſe their ex-

pences, and carry luxury to a pitch perhaps unknown to all former ages. No leſs evident than their cauſe are the effects of the vaſt and ſudden increaſe of riches. The firſt and moſt obvious effect of money, or its ſigns, is the decreaſe of its value, like that of all other commodities; for money being but a commodity, its value muſt be dependent on itſelf, and the quantity of things to be purchaſed with it. In countries where there is but little money, or ſigns of money, and plenty of proviſions, there proviſions muſt be cheap; that is, a great deal of them will be exchanged for little money: on the contrary, where there is great plenty of money, or ſigns of money, and but little proviſions in proportion to the number of conſumers, thoſe proviſions will inevitably be dear; that is, a great deal of money muſt be given to buy them. In all ages, and in all countries, theſe effects muſt always follow their cauſes; and that they have done ſo, the hiſtory of all countries ſufficiently inform us. The value of money, about ſix hundred years ago, was perhaps more than twenty times greater than at preſent; and it has decreaſed not leſs than one fourth during the preſent century: and if it could be exactly computed, would, I doubt not, be found to be in due proportion to the increaſe of its quantity, either in real or fictitious caſh; and that the price of proviſions has advanced in the ſame proportion in the ſame time.

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The increaſe of money, or the ſigns of it, does not only operate on the price of proviſions, by the diminution of its own value, but by enabling more people to purchaſe, and of courſe conſume them, one way or other, which muſt unavoidably increaſe their ſcarcity, and ſtill add more to their price. Twenty rich families will conſume at leaſt twelve times as much meat, butter, ſoap, and candles, as twenty poor families conſiſting of the ſame number; and the prices of all theſe muſt certainly riſe in proportion to the demand. In many countries of Europe this effect of the increaſe of wealth is viſible at this time; and in none more than in Great Britain.

The conſumption of every thing is amazingly increaſed from the increaſe of wealth, not only in the metropolis, but in every part of the kingdom. Throughout all ranks and conditions of men, the manner of living is no leſs amazingly altered. The merchant, who formerly thought himſelf fortunate if in the courſe of thirty or forty years, by large trade, and ſtrict œconomy, he amaſſed together twenty or thirty thouſand pounds, now acquires in leſs than half that time, double that ſum, or breaks for a greater; and all that time vies with the firſt of our nobility in his houſes, table, furniture, and equipage. In the metropolis, and other large cities and towns, the ſhop-keeper, who uſed to be as well contented with one diſh of meat, one fire, &c. has now three or four times as many:

his wife has her card parties, and muſt be in the preſent faſhion, with no ſtays, the petticoat ſeems pinned to the cravat, and the arms come out at the pocket holes;—ſhe muſt go to the play-houſe in winter, the watering-places in ſummer, and Aſtley's amphitheatre in autumn: and his journeyman climbs from the ſhop to the front boxes of the play-houſe. In his ſhop is ſeldom a ſerving woman to be ſeen, but ſeveral well-powdered gentlemen, to ſerve with all the politeneſs required by the firſt female characters. The loweſt manufacturer, and meaneſt mechanic, will touch nothing but the very beſt pieces of meat, and the fineſt white bread; and if they cannot obtain this, they think they have a right to ſeek redreſs of grievances, by a reform in parliament. To this catalogue, however, it is well for the country there are many exceptions.

Since then the value of money is greatly decreaſed by its quantity; and the conſumption of proviſions of all kinds very much increaſed by univerſal luxury; and the ſupplies we uſed to receive from poorer countries, now alſo grown rich, more hard to be come at; the preſent exorbitant prices of all the neceſſaries of life can be no wonder.

From what I have advanced, the high price of proviſions may be eaſily accounted for, without having recourſe to foreſtallers, regraters, monopolizers, and farmers keeping back their produce till they

they can get a high price for it, with all the other cauſes which are aſſigned by eſſay and newſpaper writers, and adopted by many of their readers. How far any of theſe, or all of them, have locally, collaterally, or accidentally, contributed to augment the price of proviſions, I pretend not to determine; nor perhaps is it of much importance to inquire, becauſe, whatever may have been their effects, I am perſuaded they could have had none at all, had they not been helped by the firſt and great cauſe, that is, the increaſe of riches. Does it, therefore, anſwer any great purpoſe, to ſearch out for the cauſes of the preſent high price of proviſions from facts, whoſe operations are not certain, and reaſons at beſt but ſpeculative; when it is ſufficiently proved from theſe two great principles, the increaſe of riches, and the increaſe of taxes. By this, however, I would by no means wiſh to diſcourage government, and the legiſlature from inquiring into abuſes, of which, doubtleſs, there are many; and applying to them as ſpeedy and efficacious remedies as poſſible, to redreſs this evil; much leſs to diſapprove the wiſe meaſures they have already taken: but I would wiſh to leſſen the unmeaſureable expectations formed by many of their ſucceſs, and the indignation conſequent from their diſappointment; and to try to ſtem thoſe abſurdities with which one is overpowered in all companies, both male and female. Almoſt every one has a noſtrum for this diſeaſe, which he pronounces in-

fallible, and throws reflections on adminiſtration for not immediately adopting it. Every week projectors exhibit ſchemes not eaſily to be underſtood, and impracticable.

Many who frequent the play-houſes, places of public amuſement, and the card-table, inveigh loudly againſt the meaſures of the legiſlature, and government in particular, for diſregarding the voice of the people, and for ſuffering proviſions to riſe and continue at ſo exorbitant a price; and are ready to recommend military execution on all butchers, bakers, poulterers, mealmen, graziers, and farmers.

Were theſe railleries productive of no bad conſequences, they would be unworthy of a ſerious confutation; but as they have a tendency to deceive, diſappoint, and exaſperate the minds of the ignorant and unwary, and to leave thoſe of their betters diſappointed and unſatisfied with government, whoever ſhall explain the fundamental true cauſes of the threatening calamity to the people, and give ſome check to the folly which is ſo frequently wrote, talked, and propagated on this ſubject, is an attempt which may render important ſervice to the political and ſocial world.

Nothing is properly dear, except ſome commodity which either from real, or fictitious ſcarcity, bears a higher price than the things in the ſame country at the ſame time. It is therefore improper to ſay that proviſions are dear, if the price of all

all ſorts of labour riſe in proportion to the price of them: when this therefore is the caſe, let us not attribute the general high price of proviſions to a wrong cauſe; but endeavour by degrees to comprehend, that in a country engaged in expenſive wars, and ſucceſsful commerce, there muſt be heavy taxes, and great riches; and where theſe are, there the prices of proviſions, and all other things, muſt be high, in ſpite of all the efforts of miniſters or parliaments, who ought not to be blamed for not effecting impoſſibilities, and counteracting the nature of things.

In its conſequences, the cheapneſs of money affects different conditions of men in a very different manner. It operates on ſome exactly in the ſame manner as real dearneſs and ſcarcity, at the ſame time that it gives to others conſiderable advantages. All thoſe who ſubſiſt on ſettled ſtipends, muſt certainly be hurt by it. Merchants and traders of all kinds are in general benefited; but the land-owners, and particularly the labourers, are moſt injured by it. Thoſe who ſubſiſt on ſettled ſtipends muſt be hurt, becauſe (if their incomes cannot be advanced in proportion to the decreaſe of the value of money, and the conſequent increaſe of the prices of every article) the ſame nominal ſum which would make them live in affluence in one period, will not prevent their ſtarving in another.

Merchants and traders are in general conſtant gainers by it; becauſe they always can raiſe whatever they deal in, as faſt, or faſter than the value of money decreaſes. But labourers, having nothing to ſubſiſt on but their daily work, muſt ever be behind hand in advancing the price of their labour; becauſe they are not able to wait till it acquires its due proportion of value; by it therefore they muſt ſuffer extremely. Neither can the landlord raiſe his rents in proportion to the fall of the value of money; becauſe the family expences of the occupier, the charges of cultivation, and the maintenance of an increaſed poor, all of them inſeparable burthens from his land, muſt riſe in proportion to that fall, and perpetually muſt retard his progreſs. The price of land and of labour muſt by degrees riſe, as money decreaſes in value; but as they are always the laſt that will feel the effects of the riſe, the labourer muſt moſt feel the diſtreſſes of it; and the land-owner muſt curtail his daily expences, or run in arrears. This, inſtead of ſpeculation, is a fact too well proved at this time by experience throughout every part of the country, where many labourers cannot procure a ſufficiency of victuals and cloathing. And notwithſtanding the raiſing of rents, and ſome improvements in agriculture, the ſame landed eſtates which formerly maintained a large family in hoſpitality and ſplendour, can ſcarcely now ſupply the

the owner in his proper ſphere of quality with the neceſſaries of life, after repairing, and paying houſe and window tax for a ſpacious manſion-houſe.

When we hear brokers, contractors, merchants, and money-lenders, calling for war, arguing for taxes and new loans, we need not wonder; for we know many of them are enriched by them: and we know too that they have ſagacity enough to know it alſo. But when landed gentlemen hold forth the ſame language, and are eager for war, which muſt involve them in diſagreeable circumſtances—when we hear them approving of loans upon loans—pleading for taxes—exulting in acquiſitions of territory and commerce, which muſt daily increaſe their expences, and diminiſh their landed income—who can imagine but that they have ſomething in view beſides the improvement of their landed eſtates and agriculture in general?

If what I have advanced be not mere ſpeculation, one conſequence will ſome time or other inevitably follow, which appears to have eſcaped the ſagacity of ſome of the greateſt approvers of the war, which is, that a nation muſt undoubtedly be thrown into diſorder and confuſion, who increaſes her debts, notwithſtanding her acquiſitions by conqueſt or commerce may bring in to individuals double the ſums which ſhe is obliged to borrow. This muſt at laſt happen by means of cauſes and conſequences

linked together, the effects of which no human wiſdom or power are able to diſunite or break.

New taxes are occaſioned by new debts, and new taxes muſt increaſe the price of proviſions; and new acquiſitions of wealth by decreaſing the value of money, or its ſigns, render them ſtill dearer. This dearth of the neceſſaries of life muſt neceſſarily augment the price of labour, which muſt advance the price of manufactures, which it would ſeem muſt check trade, muſt injure the poor, hurt manufactures, and tend to introduce bankruptcy and diſorder. Artificers of all kinds will by degrees emigrate to cheaper countries *. The pay of navies and armies muſt be augmented; otherwiſe they will not continue to defend a country which cannot maintain them.

I think from the foregoing obſervations it plainly appears, that the preſent high price of all the neceſſaries of life, ariſes chiefly from private opulence and public poverty; or from the increaſe of taxes and of riches. Theſe are the deſtructive diſeaſes which have put into confuſion all the greateſt and moſt flouriſhing empires of the world. Their fatal

* In the courſe of the laſt ten months it is ſuppoſed, and pretty well aſcertained, that not leſs than 1000 perſons, natives, have from Great Britain emigrated to America. To be ſure, we have more than that number of French emigrants in England; but whether they may prove as good, or better ſubjects than thoſe Britons which have took to their heels, is a queſtion which cannot be eaſily anſwered.

effects

effects have been ſufficiently known in all ages; but the remedy, after they have got to a certain period, which will effectually cure them, is yet undiſcovered. For this purpoſe the accumulation of foreign wealth cannot be effectual. If by the introduction of the vaſt treaſures of the eaſtern empires, our whole national debt was to be paid off at once, it would but haſten anarchy and confuſion; for ſuch a vaſt and ſudden influx of riches would ſo increaſe our expence, and decreaſe the value of money, that we ſhould at once be overwhelmed with luxury and want. If it could be done, the beſt method of cure would be to take unneceſſary wealth from individuals, and diſcharge the debts of the public with it: but juſtice, law, and liberty will not allow the ſcheme to be put in execution. Therefore, whoever would attempt the arduous undertaking, muſt not begin by deſtroying regraters, engroſſers, and monopolizers, but by paying off the national debt gradually, and as ſoon as poſſible, by narrowing thoſe drains through which riches have in ſuch torrents flowed into the purſes of private men. They who undertake this, muſt ſtop their ears againſt all applications for opening new channels of trade at the public expence, to enrich individuals. They muſt reſiſt all applications for ſettling new colonies; and muſt lay aſide the preſent war, and take care not to enter into new ones.

Whether theſe meaſures are practicable, or conſiſtent with the dignity and honour of Great Britain, in

in other reſpects, how can ſuch an one as me determine? Nevertheleſs, I will venture to predict, that by no other means can this calamity, ſo loudly complained of, be redreſſed or wholly ſet aſide.

Hitherto I have commented on the high price of proviſions in general; but I ſhall now more particularly conſider that of bread corn, which is the moſt eſſential neceſſary of life. There was in 1794, an uncommon deficiency of the crops of corn all over England: this, I apprehend, was occaſioned by the exceſſive dry ſummer, and not by the froſt, as is affirmed by ſome authors *, who cannot be expected to know theſe things experimentally. The deficiency of the wheat crop was not by the generality of the people believed; and during the winter and ſpring the prices being high induced farmers to bring their wheat plentifully to market: this gave contractors and merchants an opportunity of purchaſing abundance for the uſe of the fleets and armies. About the middle of ſummer, however, the deficiency began to be generally perceived, and more openly talked of. Nevertheleſs it was ſtill diſcredited by many, and reflections were thrown on the farmers and dealers for keeping the corn back from market: and even the members of government were, it ſeems, induced to be of this way of thinking. They therefore concluded that if a conſiderable cargo could be imported, it would make

* See a pamphlet by the Rev. Mr. HODSON, of London.

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the home growed wheat come into market from every part of the country in abundance: but experience ſoon taught them that there was not ſo much in the country as ſome perſons, prejudiced againſt farmers and meal-men, are always ready to repreſent when a dearth happens.

Theſe things being taken into conſideration by government, ſome of the chief members thereof entered into a reſolution to uſe in their families no white bread, but that made of the whole produce of the wheat, the bran or hull only excepted. This reſolution they publiſhed, undoubtedly with a good motive; but I conceive it had a contrary effect, for it increaſed in all parts of the country the alarm of a threatening ſcarcity; and every diſtrict, and even every pariſh, manifeſted ſymptoms of endeavouring to retain within themſelves what bread corn, flour, and meal remained in their neighbourhood. This gave ſome check to a free circulation, which muſt of neceſſity ever enhance the price of any commodity locally, if not generally, to far above the real value. Murmurings were heard among the lower claſſes, and even in ſome parts of the kingdom ſlight riots took place. It was generally admitted that the price of labour was not in proportion to the price of proviſions. Many gentlemen and farmers, therefore, very laudably raiſed the wages of their day labourers; and many pariſhes entered into ſubſcriptions for the purpoſe of lowering the price of bread and flour to poor families.

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The lower claſs, and ſome of the middle too, as far as my knowledge reached, took it into their heads that this kingdom every year grows much more wheat than is neceſſary for the ſupport and conſumption of its inhabitants; and that it is ſuffered and even excited to be exported for the purpoſe of raiſing its price, in order that the landed intereſt may be able to raiſe the rent of land. To make it appear, therefore, beyond all contradiction, that Great Britain does not, nor upon an average has not for more than twenty years, produced bread corn enough for the maintenance of its inhabitants, I have here given a table, including the quantities of corn exported and imported, and the average prices from 1771 to 1794.

Large families uſing brown bread only, may ſave a ſmall expence to thoſe that adopt it; but to the public at large I conceive ſuch ſaving can amount to a mere trifle, if any at all. However, the introduction of bread into large rich families, made of the whole produce of wheat, may be of much ſervice, if it be meant as a prelude to the adoption of it throughout the kingdom. This cannot be effected but by paſſing an act of parliament to compel the millers to make but one ſort of flour only. Was this done, and at the ſame time an act paſſed prohibiting bread corn from being turned into any other uſe but that of the food of man, a great quantity by that means would be ſaved annually.

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At a moderate calculation not leſs than fifty thouſand quarters of wheat are annually made into ſtarch and hair powder; and inſtead of prohibiting wheat from being turned into the latter unneceſſary article, the legiſlature has licenſed every one to uſe it who chooſes to pay one guinea a year to the revenue. For a countryman of perception to walk the ſtreets of London at this time, and view the powdered heads and ſhoulders in the ſtreets, in the ſhops, and at the ſhop doors, he muſt think there is no ſcarcity of flour in the metropolis; and by the way too, if he obſerve the ladies, the female ſex dreſſed in their ſhort waiſts, making themſelves appear crook-backed, he muſt conclude them a degeneracy occaſioned by the inſalubrity of the air, ariſing from the fumes of the immenſe overgrown city. I am alſo credibly informed that paſte-board makers, paper-hangers, and upholſterers, conſume much flour in making paſte.

The appearance of ſcarcity ſtill continuing, about the month of July government thought it neceſſary to take the foreign corn trade into their own hand. This has by ſome been condemned, and by others juſtified. Let the members of government act how they will, in a time of ſcarcity, reflections will be thrown on them. It is therefore my opinion, they took the moſt ſafe way to ſecure the country againſt a famine. They have for a conſiderable time ſold in London alone ten thouſand quarters of foreign wheat weekly, beſides flour. Nevertheleſs, while

there is no proſpect of a real want, it is certainly not prudent in government to interfere in the market: nothing but a well-founded apprehenſion of abſolute neceſſity, ſhould ever induce them to become purchaſers on their own account: and they ought not to begin their operations till all other means have failed. But when the government of France, circumſtanced as it is at preſent, in reſpect to Britain, trades with the whole money of the nation, and buys up the corn of every nation it can come at, at any price, our government is forced into the meaſure. At foreign markets, individuals in this country cannot enter into competition with a powerful nation.

It is to be feared that the crops of wheat of this year are not more, if not leſs plentiful, than thoſe of laſt year. The reaſon of their deficiency this year appears to me to be the following: the autumn, or wheat ſeed time of 1794, was remarkably rainy; and the ſevere froſts which happened ſoon after, and continued till the ſpring of 1795, killed or hurt many of the ſeed plants, and thoſe that were not deeply planted were hoiſted above ground; and the latter part of the ſpring, and fore part of the ſummer, proving remarkably dry, the plants did not ſtock: the crops therefore, in general, appear to have been thin, particularly on low-lying lands. It is on this account to be dreaded that unleſs much wheat is imported, wheat, and conſequently bread, will continue to be very dear, not only the remainder

der of this, but alſo the greateſt part of the year 1796; and if this happen to be the caſe, it will fall particularly hard on the day-labouring poor.

To remedy this evil, the beſt ſcheme I can deviſe, or adviſe, is, to raiſe the price of labour in proportion to the price of proviſions.

The method of raiſing money by ſubſcription, and therewith lowering the price of bread, to married labouring men, having two or more children, which is practiſed, breeds diſcontent and murmuring among labourers, and is, in my opinion, a very impolitic meaſure. I adviſed otherwiſe, "Nevertheleſs the poor man's wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard." SOLOMON.

A ſingle labouring man ought to be able to lay by a few pounds againſt the day of adverſity, or marriage; but if he cannot do this, how is a man to live who has a wife and one child to maintain; but according to the preſent mode of making up the deficiency of wages in theſe dear times, in ſome pariſhes, neither the one or the other of the laſt deſcribed are included. Is this impartiality? or may it not rather be ſtiled inequality? Surely it is the right way to keep the labouring claſs on a mediocrity or equality of property.

The act of parliament of the 31ſt Geo. 3. relative to corn, ſhews the opinion of the legiſlature on the price of it, that is, that the average price of wheat per quarter ſhould fluctuate between 44 and 50 ſhillings.

50 ſhillings. If the price of wheat, agreeable to this opinion, do not riſe higher on an average than 50 ſhillings, and the other neceſſary articles of proviſions in proportion, I think the wages commonly paid to day labourers are ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence; I mean in Middleſex, Eſſex, Kent, and Surry, where the common run of wages are not leſs than nine and ten ſhillings per week; but if the average price of wheat riſe higher than about ſix ſhillings and ſixpence the buſhel, and other articles in proportion, labourers wages ought to be raiſed, or elſe there will be a deficiency which muſt be made up by ſome other means.

Notwithſtanding the riſe of wages by many humane gentlemen and farmers, and the immenſe poor rate; yet for ſeveral months of this year have great numbers of the poor of this kingdom been living on funds ſubſcribed by the rich and opulent. Such, in my opinion, is not a good or deſirable ſtate of ſociety: for poor labourers being habituated to the reſort of benevolent ſubſcriptions, depend on them for occaſional ſupport; and by degrees are accuſtomed to receive the voluntary gratuity without gratitude, and to look upon it as the demand of poverty on riches. That mild bond of dependence or protection, the harmonious connexion of ſenſibility, and thankfulneſs for relief, are faſt wearing away. The benevolence of the benefactor ſeems to be but little or not at all regarded as the act of ſympathy and compaſſion, but a yielding to fear.

If

If the price of proviſions, and particularly that of corn, can be brought and kept to a moderate rate, which appears to me would, on many accounts, be better policy than that of raiſing the price of labour, government need not be alarmed on account of the ſeditious endeavours of reſtleſs people. On the contrary, if proviſions continue ſo dear that poor people cannot procure a moderate ſufficiency to ſupply their neceſſary wants, diſcontent will more and more take place, and hungry ſtomachs and thin cloathing will weaken attachment to the conſtitution. The want of proviſions will keep the minds of the lower claſs unſtable, and of courſe will be eaſily worked on by men longing for a change of meaſures.

By the proceedings of many charitable ſocieties, and reference to orders of ſeſſions in many counties of England, it has been admitted, that on account of the increaſed price of the neceſſaries of life, the poor cannot live on the preſent wages. Such public declarations are of greater conſequence than perhaps gentlemen were aware of, when they made them. If facts are once admitted to the people, they cannot be eaſily denied; conſequently proviſions, particularly bread, muſt be lowered in price, or elſe the price of labour generally raiſed.

The foregoing obſervations relate to matters of much political importance; and which, I apprehend, cannot be properly adjuſted without the interference of the legiſlature. On the whole, however, theſe things lead to the principal ſubject, that

is, the improvement of agriculture; which I truſt parliament will take up in a ſerious manner.

In the beginning of the following ſheets I mentioned the eſtabliſhment of a board of agriculture; ſince then it has been very diligent in the means of attaining the deſired object. It however, in my opinion, has made no very great progreſs; but it ſtill promiſes much; and as I ſaid, with the aſſiſtance of parliament, may be of much ſervice to the country. It gives me pleaſure to find that the board has imbibed principles of political œconomy which myſelf have publicly avowed, and recommended. For in a paper lately publiſhed the preſident ſays, "For many years paſt conſtant complaints have been made of the increaſing price of proviſions. Many cauſes have been aſſigned for ſuch a circumſtance, and many remedies ſuggeſted; but the moſt effectual one, undoubtedly, is that of cultivating the many millions of acres now lying waſte. The laſt and moſt important object to which the attention of the board can be directed, is that of attending to the ſituation and circumſtances of the lower orders of people. That important branch of our duty had not been neglected during the courſe of the preſent ſeſſion. A matter of that importance, however, requires much deliberation before either parliament can be applied to for new laws, or any recommendation can be ſubmitted to the conſideration of private individuals. But there were three points which ſeemed to meet with a very general concurrence;

concurrence; the firſt was, to promote improvements in the conſtruction of cottages; more eſpecially to aſcertain the means by which the conſumption of fuel could be diminiſhed. The ſecond, to recommend the annexing of a large garden to each cottage, by which the labourer, with the aſſiſtance of his family, might be enabled to raiſe a conſiderable quantity of proviſions without being obliged to go to market for every thing he had occaſion for."

The board alſo agrees with my idea, that the people ſtand in need of improvement in regard to their morals. But I am ſorry to find, that it makes the means of attaining this grand object the laſt in the catalogue to be by them aſcertained. Until a general reformation of the morals of the people of Great Britain take place, the improvement of agriculture, I am of opinion, will go but ſlowly on. Many however ſay, let us have a reform in parliament, and then we ſhall have a reformation of manners, and of the morals of the people. But I ſay, let the manners and morals of the whole nation be firſt reformed; and when that is effected, a reform in parliament will ſpontaneouſly take place. Let oppreſſion, pride, ambition, envy, curſing, drunkenneſs, ſabbath-breaking, lying, murder, whoredom, adultery, bribery, cheating, &c. be laid aſide, and then a reformation of parliament will immediately begin. Do not we, whoſe lot it has been to fall in the loweſt claſs of ſociety, ſee all theſe vices prac-

tiſed by thoſe in high life? How then can we wholly avoid following their bad example? many, now, of the higheſt claſs of ſociety, live in open fornication and adultery, without the leaſt apparent ſhame or remorſe. The play houſes are crouded, and the churches are greatly deſerted.

From what I have juſt ſaid reſpecting a reform in parliament, I would not wiſh to be thought to be againſt ſuch a deſirable meaſure, if it could be effected without becoming the prelude or inlet to anarchy and confuſion. Even conſidering the preſent ſtate of the apparent views and proceedings of men in the higher claſs of ſociety, I think it would be proper, and not likely to be attended with any bad conſequences, to make parliaments again triennial; and that for the following reaſons: I obſerve in the hiſtory of the proceedings of the parliaments of Great Britain, that when once a majority of the members declared in favour of a prime miniſter for carrying on a war, either from the ſhame of being called turn-coats, or from ſome other perhaps no better motive, they ſupported it till either the miniſter was diſcharged, or parliament diſſolved. Until men be reformed in their morals, is it to be ſuppoſed that the mode of electing members of parliament will be given up, without a moſt violent ſtruggle? It is ſaid by one of the greateſt philoſophers and chriſtians that ever lived, PAUL, that the "love of money is the root of all evil," and we are credibly informed that votes, ſuffrages, and ſeats in parliament,

parliament, are bought with and ſold for great ſums of money: can it therefore be expected that before a reformation in the motives, deſigns, or morals of ſuch monopolizers takes place, a beneficial reform of any extent in the repreſentation of the people is likely, in the nature of things, to be brought about without anarchy and confuſion. Since man fell from his primitive ſtate, his nature prompts him to a love of riches, power, and dominion; and when he once gets poſſeſſion of theſe, he will not, unleſs it be for the gratification of his depraved propenſities, very eaſily give up his hold, till he is convinced not only of his duty to man, but to Him who knows, and is acquainted perfectly with the imaginations of the inmoſt receſſes of the ſoul.

Viewing and weighing theſe things in a juſt balance, it behoves Great Britain in the firſt place, and without delay, to begin a reformation of ſinful manners and cuſtoms. For though a courſe of morality in ceaſing from oppreſſion and iniquity of all ſorts, and of becoming juſt and philanthropic in all the concerns of life, cannot merit heaven, or ſecure eternal felicity; yet a courſe of morality, which I conſider to be in plain language neither more or leſs than avoiding evil and doing good to our fellow mortals, never fails of obtaining temporal bleſſings for nations and individuals who practiſe ſuch things; their puniſhment in the life hereafter will be leſs (and perhaps none) than that of thoſe who go on in a courſe of oppreſſion, debauch-

ery, or ſinful practices of any kind. That God in the courſe of his providence puniſhes the people of all nations for their wickedneſs, and bleſſes them for their righteous dealings to one another, is demonſtrated by the hiſtory of all nations, particularly that of the Jewiſh. Let the awful judgments which of late have overwhelmed France, and the adjoining countries, on account of the immorality of its inhabitants, be a warning to Great Britain.

Among other pretended rights of man, it has of late been publicly held forth, that "what a nation wills to do, it has a right to do." This, however, evidently appears to me to be a falſe poſition. The people taken collectively is more likely to will wrong, than to will right; but is that a juſt or equitable reaſon for refuſing that which is intrinſically right, and for adopting that which is morally wrong? A nation, or at leaſt the government of a nation, ought to be able clearly to diſtinguiſh between right and wrong; and although nations and governments, as well as individuals, may be deceived in their judgments, and paſs wrong acts, which if they do not directly authorize, may connive at immorality; yet they have no authority to do ſo: they ſhould therefore at all times be open to conviction, and as ſoon as they perceive their error in giving ſanction to immorality, or to any thing that may tend to debauch the morals of the people of all, or of any of the ranks

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in ſociety, they ought immediately to return to their duty.

Several things which obviouſly tend to foſter immorality, are at this time ſanctioned by the legiſlature; ſuch as the lottery; the mode of conducting ſtage plays, and their increaſe throughout the country; the vaſt quantity of ſpirituous liquors diſtilled and imported; the great number of ale and dram-drinking houſes; the ſlave-trade and ſlavery in our colonies; the plurality of livings among the clergy, and the manner of their performing their duty among the pariſhioners, or people committed to their reſpective care; the manner of paying the ſalaries of thoſe ſet apart for the purpoſe of preaching the goſpel, and mending the morals of thoſe grown, and of the riſing generation; and the mode of conducting the election of members of parliament; all tend directly or indirectly to the ſuppreſſion of morality, and the increaſe of immorality and diſſipation.

For a proof that immorality is gaining much ground, I refer to Sir John Sinclair's Statiſtical Account of Scotland, lately publiſhed. It is there to be ſeen what a ſuperiority immorality and luxury has lately gained over ſobriety and morality in Scotland; and in England, particularly in the metropolis, a no leſs change in that reſpect has been effected.

God Almighty, the ſole governor of the univerſe, before he, in the courſe of his providence,

brought calamities on nations and people for their wickedneſs, always by ſome means or other, gave, and ſtill gives them warning and time to repent: and I entertain not the ſhadow of a doubt, but at this time the Almighty is dealing with Britain in the ſame way. If, therefore, ſhe do not hear and underſtand the voice of providence, that now loudly ſpeaketh, and turn and ſincerely repent, it is to be feared ſhe will before long be in a ſimilar ſtate to that of a neighbouring nation. Let her therefore ſpeedily follow the example of that great city Nineveh, deſcribed in the book of JONAH, "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a faſt, and put on ſackcloth, from the greateſt of them even to the leaſt of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he aroſe from his throne, and he laid his robes from him, and covered him with ſackcloth, and publiſhed through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, ſaying, Let neither man nor beaſt, herd nor flock, taſte any thing; let them not feed nor drink water, but let man and beaſt be covered with ſackcloth, and cry mightily unto God; yea let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn away from his fierce anger that we periſh not?" This faſt of the people of Nineveh was ſuch as that deſcribed in the 58th chapter of ISAIAH's prophecy: "Is not this (ſaith the Lord) the faſt that I have choſen, to looſe the bonds of wicked-

wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppreſſed go free?"

Had not the people of Nineveh humbled themſelves, and turned from their wickedneſs, it is probable they would have met with a ſimilar fate to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, who after repeated warnings were deſtroyed in a moſt dreadful way for their obſtinacy in wickedneſs.

The following is a paſſage from a ſermon preached in the pariſh church of Chertſey in Surry by a miniſter of the church of England laſt faſt day.

"Moſt of you may remember, that during the continuance of the American war, when combined nations ſought our deſtruction, our ſovereign repeatedly called us to acts of humiliation, ſimilar to the preſent. Again and again did we aſſemble and ſupplicate for the pardon of thoſe offences which we acknowledged were but juſtly puniſhed; and for the divine grace ſo to amend our lives, that our tranſgreſſions might no more call down the avenging hand of heaven. But while we thus drew near to God with our lips, what was the reformation really wrought among us? The particular alterations in the conduct of each individual may in ſome meaſure be only known to himſelf. The amendments of ſome particular habits, and the introduction of a more ſerious turn of thought, among ſome claſſes of ſociety, might be noticed by thoſe immediately connected with them; but any

any thing like a general turn to the paths of temperance and piety, muſt have occaſioned a change in the manners of the nation at large, that could not have eſcaped general obſervation, nor have left ground for thoſe reflections which may juſtly be made on the progreſs of voluptuouſneſs and irreligion among us ſince the concluſion of that war.

Had ſuch a reformation taken place, it could not have been ſaid that the houſes, the tables, and the equipages of the great continue to exhibit inſtances of the moſt waſteful and unfeeling luxury; much leſs that the inferior ranks copied with avidity the ſad example. We ſhould not in that caſe have had to reprove the tradeſman with affecting the manner of the prince; with confounding the natural ſeaſons of labour and of reſt; and with detracting a material portion from thoſe hours which were wont to be applied to buſineſs, that he may ſpend more in the indulgencies of faſhion."

It is natural to men to overlook the faults of themſelves, and of thoſe of the ſociety or ſect to which they belong. This is exemplified, in a ſuperior degree, among the clergy; for we too frequently hear the illiberal miniſters of every religious ſect, fulminating anathemas againſt thoſe who differ from them, perhaps, in things which are merely non-eſſential. Thus we hear the Rev. Mr. CLAPHAM, whom I before mentioned, ſtigmatizing thoſe who train up their children in more ſtrict habits of religion and morality, than

than he approves of. In page 19, 20, of his ſermon, he ſays, "Many of them (Methodiſts) perſuade themſelves that their duty towards their children is completely diſcharged, by compelling them to attend the prayers of their family, and the preaching of their aſſemblies. What is the effect? meanneſs and deceit take deep root in their minds, and produce a copious harveſt of ſecret follies and concealed irregularities. Deprived of rational amuſements, wearied with long prayers, diſguſted with puritanical converſation, the moment they eſcape from their deluded parents, they fall a prey, as is naturally to be expected, to every temptation."

To this I would anſwer, it is undoubtedly the duty of parents, to train up their children in the habits of religion and morality; though when they arrive at manhood they may depart from them. Man is naturally full of deceit: "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him." PAUL. Man, as I already hinted, is naturally poſſeſſed of the ſpirit of the devil; and this nature, or ſpirit of the devil, cannot be reformed, or made good, but it may be reſtrained, chained down, or kept under. We indeed ought to be continually at war with it. Nevertheleſs, we can neither kill or deſtroy it. It has caſt down many wounded; yea, many ſtrong men have been ſlain by it. CAIN was the firſt that fell a ſacrifice to it. BALAAM, the prophet, was

was ſlain by it. SAMPSON, and the valiant king SAUL, were fearfully tormented with it. NOAH, the preacher, could not withſtand it; nor MOSES, the meek man of God. The mighty king DAVID was moſt ſhamefully overcome by it; and ſo was Solomon the wiſe. Its houſe is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. PAUL, the regenerate, ſays, "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I ſee another law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin."

JOASH, king of Judah, was religiouſly trained up, and kept under the ſuperintendance of the good man JEHOIADA; but no ſooner was he dead, than that infatuated monarch became exceedingly wicked. Was the wickedneſs which this prince fell into to be attributed to the religious reſtraints which JEHOIADA, when alive, laid upon him? or was he to be ſtigmatized for the religious education he gave king JOASH? ſurely not. The truth of the matter is this—The Britiſh nation is gradually falling into habits of luxury and diſſipation, and becoming very indifferent and careleſs about training up the riſing generation in habits of religion and morality.

When I wrote the following treatiſe on the Improvement of Agriculture, I had occaſion to mention ſome of the conſequences proceeding from the employing of ſlaves in the cultivation of the ſoil. Therein I have entered my weak proteſt againſt

againſt the ſlave trade. Since the publication of which, I have read two new books, the one, The Hiſtory of the Weſt Indies by BRYAN EDWARDS, Eſq. the other, The Principles of Moral Philoſophy, by THOMAS GISBORNE, M. A. The former of theſe is, in my opinion, the moſt powerful book yet publiſhed in ſupport of the ſlave trade, and of ſlavery in the iſlands; becauſe the author is evidently a man of much learning, great eloquence, talents, and ſkill in writing, combined with ſtrong moral and religious profeſſions of great ſympathy for the fate of thoſe ſubjected to ſlavery; declaring it was once his opinion that "an immediate and unqualified ſuppreſſion of this reprobated commerce" ſhould take place. But now, he ſays, for the ſake of mankind in general, and the Africans in particular, he has changed his opinion, and with all the eloquence of language he peremptorily maintains, that neither ſlavery in the iſlands, nor the ſlave trade, ought to be aboliſhed.

Notwithſtanding the abilities of this learned gentleman, thoſe of perception, who read attentively his work, will ſee therein a moſt glaring contradiction. For in one part he ſays "Four hundred and fifty thouſand reaſonable beings are in the Engliſh iſlands only, in a ſtate of barbarity and ſlavery; of whom great numbers aſſuredly have been torn from their native country, by means which no good mind can reflect upon, but with ſentiments of diſguſt, commiſeration, and ſorrow."

And in another part he ſays, "It cannot ſurely be a queſtion among enlightened and humane people, concerning the unlawfulneſs of a traffic ſupported by kidnapping, petty wars, rapacity, revenge, and the commutation of death into ſlavery, for crimes real and pretended." Yet he ſhortly after proceeds to object to the abolition of the ſlave trade on the part of Great Britain; contending deliberately for the continuation of a trade thus confeſſedly unjuſt; grounding his arguments on reaſonings and aſſertions, which, I imagine, will not appear to have any real foundation in point of fact, to perſons who have ſtudied impartially the nature and conſequences which are likely to proceed from the ſlave trade and ſlavery.

The latter author, Mr. GISBORNE, pretends ſtrenuouſly to oppoſe the ſlave trade; for in page 364 he ſays, "During the laſt three years, rapine and treachery have been redoubling their exertions, as might naturally be expected on the coaſt of Africa; and the importation of ſlaves into our iſlands has been moſt enormous. The courſe of future events is inſcrutable; but as far as we can foreſee, there ſeem appearances ſufficient to juſtify the belief, that the divine indignation will not much longer endure the exiſtence of the ſlave trade; and that what Great Britain does not, by means of law, Providence will do by inſtruments of vengeance. Whatever be the iſſue of the preſent conteſt with France, it is impoſſible to conceive that the principles

ciples which have been inſtilled by the French into the breaſts of the negroes, will ever be eradicated from ſuch minds."

After ſuch a declaration as this, to thoſe who believe not that the heart of man is totally depraved, it may ſeem unaccountable that the very ſame man who thus pretends ſtrongly to reprobate the ſlave trade, is a moſt powerful advocate for ſlavery. It is his own words and not mine that ſhall prove the aſſertion. In page 164 he ſays, "For the juſt purpoſes of indemnification and puniſhment, ſlavery may be impoſed. Whoever, therefore, has honeſtly purchaſed from the proper owner, either in Africa or the Weſt Indies, a ſlave whom, after ſerious enquiry, he believes in his conſcience to have been deſervedly condemned to that ſtate for either of theſe ends, has not violated juſtice in the tranſaction; nor ſuppoſing that his conviction continues, and that he faithfully diſcharges the duties of a maſter, will he act unjuſtly in exacting the labour of the ſlave, during the term for which he was condemned (whether it were for a limited period or for life), nor in diſpoſing of him for the whole, or any part of the term, to any other whom he has reaſon to think diſpoſed and likely to treat the ſlave properly." In another part of the book he ſays, "It appears that thoſe writers who have contended that a ſtate of ſlavery cannot be reconciled with juſtice, and that the poſſeſſion, the ſale, or the transfer of a

ſlave,

ſlave, is in every inſtance an act of uſurpation, have proceeded to much greater lengths than ſober argument will vindicate."

For a man to make ſuch public declarations as theſe, and immediately after argue for the abolition of the ſlave trade, muſt, I think, be only laughed at by thoſe who are avowed advocates for both ſlavery and the ſlave trade.

If ſlavery in any ſhape be lawful, conſequently ſo muſt a well regulated ſlave trade. Confining, puniſhing, or tranſporting wicked, dangerous perſons, does not conſtitute ſlavery. Oppreſſion, of whatever degree, is a ſpecies of ſlavery, becauſe it is contrary to the will and command of God. I count it ſlavery for nations or individuals to force their fellow creatures to ſerve them againſt their will.

Whatever may be the ſentiments of the legiſlature, or of the people of Great Britain, concerning theſe things, I am well perſuaded that neither the principles of the conſtitution, nor of the laws of Great Britain, favour in the ſmalleſt degree ſlavery, or the ſlave trade.

Of late, much has been written and ſaid reſpecting the atrocious actions of the Africans, and of the inhabitants of other nations to each other. Let them alone. Britain is not accountable for their ſins. If ſhe can convert them to Chriſtianity it is well; but let her not attempt to do it by force.

Had

Had I time, I could prove from ſcripture and from reaſon, that ſlavery is contrary to the law and will of God.

It appears to me, that the majority of the higher rank in Great Britain, are againſt the abolition of ſlavery and the ſlave trade; and that the majority of the middle rank are for the abolition. The lower rank, in general, know but little about the ſlave trade; nor do I mean to give them information on that ſubject, though I make one of the number.

Mr. EDWARDS ſays, "The circumſtances wherein the ſlaves in the Weſt Indies ſeem moſtly indebted to their owner's liberality, are, I think, thoſe of medical attendance." In this reſpect we find in Britain many who take better care of their horſes, than they do of their ſervants. The ſlave is as much the property of the Weſt Indian planter, as is the horſe of the Britiſh proprietor. Both therefore have a temporal intereſt in preſerving the lives and health of their ſubjected animals. But let us conſider the ſubject in another point of view. I believe it will be generally admitted, that it is the duty of every father, and head of a family, in Great Britain, to take care that all under their roof, ſervants as well as children, are obedient to the moral law, whether it relate to the commands of God, or to the laws of the land, as founded thereon—not only for the ſake of the peace and good order of ſociety, but in conſideration alſo that the ſouls of all are alike precious. "As for me

and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord," is the ſaying and reſolution of, I believe, the greateſt general that ever led an army to battle, I mean JOSHUA. Is the duty of the heads of families in the Britiſh colonies leſs than thoſe of Britain? Surely not. The ſlaves of the maſter may juſtly be conſidered as a part of his family: it is therefore, I apprehend, as much his duty to inſtruct them in the principles of morality and religion, as it is to inſtruct them in the cultivation of his ſugar and tobacco plantations. But is this the caſe in Jamaica? That it is not, the following paſſage will demonſtrate: "The Negroes are allowed one day in a fortnight, except in time of crop, beſides Sundays and holidays, for cultivating their grounds, and carrying their proviſions to market. Sunday is their day of market: and it is wonderful what numbers are then ſeen haſtening from all parts of the country, towards the towns and ſhipping places, laden with fruits and vegetables, pigs, goats, and poultry, their own property. In Jamaica it is ſuppoſed that upwards of 10,000 aſſemble every Sunday morning in the market of Kingſton, where they barter their proviſions, &c. for ſalted beef and pork, or fine linen and ornaments for their wives and children." EDWARDS's Hiſtory of the Weſt Indies, vol. ii. p. 133. The hiſtorian farther informs us, that the ſlave maſters give their ſlaves land to cultivate, from which they are expected, by their labour on theſe holy-

days,

days, to produce a maintenance for themſelves, families, and penſioners.

It is an oppreſſive, haughty, domineering ſpirit, which pervades and reigns among the nations, and people of Europe, that occaſions all the ſeditions, combinations, and wars, now taking place, and which are likely with little interruption to continue, unleſs a reformation in the morals, views, and conduct of the people of all claſſes is brought about. If a people, or realm, in the preſent times, attempt to make regulations or improvements in their mode or form of government, the neighbouring nations forbid it by menaces and threats; and if theſe anſwer not their purpoſes, then the territories of ſuch are ſeized under a pretence of humanity—of acting for the good of ſociety—of ſupporting the balance of power; witneſs Poland.

The moſt powerful nations in Europe, it ſeems, think themſelves not ſafe without entering into treaties of defenſive alliance. Even Great Britain, renowned for her ſtrength, independency, and happy mild conſtitution, thinks it neceſſary to enter into alliances with the moſt deſpotic governments.

Ruſſia, ſtretching from the frozen ocean to the forty-ſeventh degree of latitude—of an extent nearly equal to all the reſt of Europe, and greater than the Roman empire in the height of its power, it appears, thinks herſelf not ſafe, but has lately

entered into a defenſive treaty with Great Britain. This, perhaps, ſhe has done, that ſhe may the more ſecurely purſue the objects of her ambition; and that under the diſguiſe of friendſhip, and a peaceable diſpoſition, ſhe may fortify and extend her dominions and power to a ſtill greater extent. If theſe are the motives which induce nations to enter into alliances, and to grant ſubſidies, the proſpect of laſting peace and tranquillity among the nations of Europe ſeems at a diſtance.

To put a ſtop to oppreſſions, ſeditions, treaſons, and wars, alliances and treaties defenſive or offenſive will not anſwer the end; neither will reforms in parliaments, in governments, or in public expenditures, be altogether effectual. Vindictive laws, capital puniſhments, impriſonments, and tranſportations, will all be found incapable of ſetting aſide that ſpirit of diſaffection which, at this time, pervades the minds of the generality of the inhabitants of Europe.

Were the exiſting laws concerning morality, and the ſuppreſſion of vice, reverenced and put in force, that I am convinced would be of much uſe; for no need would there then be, I apprehend, of adding to the multiplicity of criminal laws already in being. But inſtead thereof, we ſee many wholeſome laws lying almoſt dormant, namely, thoſe for the puniſhment of ſabbath-breaking, drunkenneſs, curſing, blaſphemy, and profaneneſs. The reaſon why theſe laws are not

enforced is, it ſeems, becauſe thoſe entruſted with their execution pay but little reſpect to them themſelves. To make this appear evident, I ſhall give one inſtance. There is an act of parliament which ſays, "If any perſon ſhall in any ſtage-play, interlude, ſhew, may-game, or pageant, jeſting, or profanely ſpeak, or uſe the holy name of God, or of Chriſt Jeſus, or of the Holy Ghoſt, or of the Trinity, he ſhall forfeit ten pounds, half to the king, and half to him that ſhall ſue." Now we know that the magiſtrate, and the parſon too, will ſit ſeemingly very comfortable at the play-houſe, &c. and hear the laws relative to theſe things openly violated, without indicating the leaſt apparent motion of diſapprobation.

Let a moral reform among the higher ranks of ſociety take place, and undoubtedly thoſe of the middle and lower will follow the example.

We hear it aſſerted, that before the late revolution "the people of France poſſeſſed many virtues; but that they have paſſed at once into barbarians." To impartial, well-informed men, this, however, appears to deviate a little from the truth; becauſe, for many years paſt, the people of that nation ſeem to have been addicted to ſuperſtition, luxury, and oppreſſion.

Prices of corn by the quarter of eight Winchester bushels, and of oatmeal per boll of 140 pounds avoirdupoiz, from August 1st, to November 1795.

Average of England and Wales per quarter.

		Wheat		Rye		Barley		Oats		Beans.		Peaſe.		Oatmeal per Boll.	
		s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Auguſt	8th	107	9	69	8	50	11	31	10	49	11	56	1	52	1
——	15th	115	7	79	4	50	9	32	9	51	9	54	2	53	11
——	22d	113	7	70	0	51	7	32	6	50	9	55	6	53	3
——	29th	103	7	58	9	47	11	30	1	58	5	54	9	52	3
September	5th	89	2	51	5	43	2	28	0	49	6	52	7	50	1
——	12th	78	7	47	8	38	11	25	11	49	3	53	11	47	1
——	19th	75	1	46	9	37	9	24	5	48	1	49	4	45	9
——	26th	73	4	44	8	34	7	23	2	48	4	48	8	44	6
October	3d	73	6	43	4	33	4	22	7	47	8	47	1	46	2
——	10th	74	2	42	3	32	7	22	0	45	4	46	4	44	10
——	17th	76	3	43	1	32	1	21	11	45	7	46	10	42	2
——	24th	78	10	44	7	32	10	22	5	45	0	46	7	43	0
——	31ſt	81	3	45	5	33	1	22	5	43	10	48	8	43	7
November	7th	83	0	45	8	34	3	23	4	44	7	48	7	45	5

Averge price, per quarter, of each county, from the returns received in the week ended Auguſt 15, 1795.

Inland Counties.

	Wheat.		Rye.		Barley.		Oats.		Beans.		Peaſe.		Oatmeal per Boll.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Middleſex	113	1	70	5	48	5	37	2	47	6	48	0	——	
Surry	111	10	66	0	46	0	37	4	48	6	44	0	——	
Hertford	120	8	——		37	6	33	7	49	4	50	1	——	
Bedford	131	9	——		64	0	32	3	48	0	——		——	
Huntingdon	133	9	——		——		27	2	43	6	——		——	
Northampton	128	0	76	0	52	0	31	0	53	0	53	0	57	3
Rutland	150	0	——		——		——		54	0	——		50	10
Leiceſter	110	4	——		42	2	31	6	54	2	——		42	10
Nottingham	144	11	45	0	57	6	32	8	49	4	——		——	
Derby	130	0	——		——		37	4	52	0	——		46	11
Stafford	133	3	——		42	2	34	9	55	5	48	10	53	8
Salop	126	10	94	4	63	11	36	9	——		——		84	10
Hereford	105	6	51	2	49	7	33	9	56	6	70	4	75	9
Worceſter	144	6	——		41	0	33	7	59	1	56	8	——	
Warwick	156	4	——		56	0	34	6	69	3	——		49	11
Wilts	96	4	——		46	0	31	3	58	6	——		——	
Berks	112	9	——		46	6	36	9	50	0	——		——	
Oxford	113	8	——		42	8	32	0	55	2	——		——	
Bucks	120	8	——		44	8	32	6	49	10	49	6	——	
Montgomery	124	4	——		——		30	11	——		——		78	2
Brecon	121	6	105	6	69	7	28	10	——		——		61	1
Radnor	118	4	——		65	8	35	4	——		——		96	6

Maritime Counties.

Average Price, per Quarter.

	Wheat.	Rye.	Barley	Oats.	Beans.	Peaſe.	Oatmeal per Boll.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Eſſex	119 6	72 0	45 0	36 0	43 0	——	——
Kent	95 11	——	45 6	34 0	42 5	53 3	——
Suſſex	98 0	——	35 0	——	——	——	——
Suffolk	113 7	——	45 9	30 3	45 6	——	53 5
Cambridge	109 9	——	32 0	27 3	——	——	——
Norfolk	99 4	——	——	——	——	——	——
Lincoln	141 11	120 0	50 0	30 0	56 0	——	——
York	110 11	93 4	——	33 11	50 10	80 0	44 8
Durham	133 4	88 10	52 10	35 9	——	——	——
Northumberland	108 3	——	42 0	31 3	——	42 8	20
Cumberland	100 4	79 4	50 6	37 3	56 0	——	47 6
Weſtmoreland	122 2	96 0	54 4	32 3	——	——	27 6
Lancaſter	110 2	——	55 11	30 9	48 3	——	29 3
Cheſter	130 0	——	——	37 7	——	——	——
Flint	134 4	——	76 9	——	——	——	——
Denbigh	118 11	——	——	38 5	——	——	——
Angleſea	——	——	45 0	——	——	——	——
Carnarvon	103 0	52 0	58 4	27 0	——	——	60 5
Merioneth	120 8	76 10	75 4	34 9	——	——	——
Cardigan	92 2	84 0	61 0	——	——	——	69 11
Pembroke	74 8	——	53 6	——	——	——	——
Carmarthen	96 0	——	56 5	——	——	——	——
Glamorgan	100 0	——	54 0	28 0	——	——	——
Glouceſter	110 10	——	——	33 7	58 2	——	——
Somerſet	97 7	——	42 4	30 0	52 0	——	——
Monmouth	109 0	——	——	——	——	——	——
Devon	105 3	——	46 9	33 0	——	——	38 6
Cornwal	88 11	——	42 8	28 0	——	——	——
Dorſet	105 3	——	——	28 0	48 0	——	——
Hants	97 7	——	47 0	——	49 0	——	——

Average price of corn for 12 weeks, in Scotland, by the quarter of eight Wincheſter buſhels, and oatmeal per boll of 128lbs Scotch Troy.

1795.	Wheat.	Rye.	Barley	Oats.	Beans.	Peaſe.	Oatmeal
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Auguſt 15th	101 4	25 8	35 2	24 7	38 0	38 11	18 4
September 15th	80 2	27 2	30 6	23 7	36 11	38 4	18 1
October 15th	64 8	27 2	26 6	20 3	37 3	38 2	17 5

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

ERRATUM.

Page 43, line 12, for 33 read 32.